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BRITISH THEATRE.

VOL XIII.

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BELL'S BRITISH THEATRE.

CONSISTING OF

THE MOST ESTEEMED

ENGLISH PLAYS.

VOL XIII.

140965

CONTAINING

LOVE IN A VILLAGE, ... BY BICKERSTAFF.

COUNTRY GIRL, { ALTERED FROM WYCHERLY BY GARRICK.

CONSCIOUS LOVERS, ... BY STEELE.

RECRUITING OFFICER, ... — FARQUHAR.

LONDON:

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LOVE in a VILLAGE.

Wyatt del. Thornthwaite

Mrs. BILLINGTON in ROSETTA.

London: Printed for John Bell, British Library, Strand, Sep. 28. 1794

London Printed for I Bell British Library Strand Jan.y 6th 1791.

LOVE IN A VILLAGE.

A

COMIC OPERA.

BY ISAAC BICKERSTAFF.

ADAPTED FOR

THEATRICAL REPRESENTATION,

AS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE-ROYAL, COVENT-GARDEN.

REGULATED FROM THE PROMPT-BOOK,

By Permission of the Managers.

"The Lines distinguished by inverted Commas, are omitted in the Representation."

LONDON:

Printed for the Proprietors, under the Direction of

JOHN BELL, British-Library, STRAND,

Bookseller to His Royal Highness the PRINCE of WALES.

M DCC XCI.

TO

MR. BEARD.

SIR,

IT is with great pleasure I embrace this opportunity to acknowledge the favors I have received from you. Among others, I would mention in particular, the warmth with which you espoused this piece in its passage to the stage; but I am afraid it would be thought a compliment to your good-nature, too much at the expence of your judgment.

If what I now venture to lay before the public, is considered merely as a piece of dramatic writing, it will certainly be found to have very little merit: in that light no one can think more indifferently of it than I do myself; but I believe I may venture to assert, on your opinion, that some of the songs are tolerable; that the music is more pleasing than has hitherto appeared in compositions of this kind; and the words better adapted, considering the nature of the airs, which are not common ballads, than could be expected, supposing any degree of poetry to be preserved in the versification.

More than this, few people expect in an Opera: and if some of the severer critics should be inclined to blame your indulgence to one of the first attempts of a young writer, I am persuaded the public in general will applaud your endeavour to provide them with something new, in a species of entertainment in which the performers at your theatre so eminently excel.

You may perceive, Sir, that I yield a punctual observance to the injunctions you laid upon me, when I threatened you with this address, and make it rather a preface than a dedication: and yet I must confess I can hardly reconcile those formalities which render it indelicate to pay praises when all the world allows them to be due; nor can I easily conceive why a man should be so studious to deserve what he does not desire: but since you will not allow me to offer any panegyric to you, I must hasten to bestow one upon myself, and let the public know (which was my chief design in this introduction) that I have the happiness to be.

SIR,

Your most obliged,

and most obedient servant.

The AUTHOR.

LOVE IN A VILLAGE.

COMPILED from the VILLAGE OPERA of Charles Johnson—and this musical Entertainment first appeared at Covent-Garden Theatre in 1763. Its success was nearly equal to that prodigy of fortune, the Beggar's Opera.

This piece is founded upon RURAL LIFE, and rural unacquaintance with the depravity of a metropolis. The characters are naturally drawn—the incidents have sufficient probability—It had the benefit of much delightful music from the composer, and the sweetest voices on the English stage have graced it by singing the airs of ROSSETTA, Young MEADOWS, and HAWTHORN.

Mrs. BILLINGTON in this Opera, as in every other we listen to her in, throws the powers of her predecessors at an immeasurable distance: her *tone*, her *taste*, and musical *science*, are the pride of the British Opera.

Dramatis Personæ.

DRURY-LANE.

Men.

Sir WILLIAM MEADOWS	Mr. Aickin.
Young MEADOWS	Mr. Kelly.
Justice WOODCOCK	Mr. Parsons.
HAWTHORNE	Mr. Dignum.
EUSTACE	Mr. Williames.
HODGE	Mr. Hollingsworth.

Women.

ROSSETTA	Mrs. Crouch.
LUCINDA	Miss Stageldoir.
DEBORAH WOODCOCK	Mrs. Love.
MARGERY	Mrs. Collett.

Dramatis Personæ.

COVENT-GARDEN.

	Men.
Sir WILLIAM MEADOWS	Mr. Powell.
Young MEADOWS	Mr. Johnstone.
Justice WOODCOCK,	Mr. Quick.
HAWTHORNE	Mr. Bannister.
EUSTACE	Mr. Davis.
HODGE	Mr. Blanchard.

	Women.
ROSSETTA	Mrs. Billington.
LUCINDA	Mrs. Mountain.
DEBORAH WOODCOCK	Mrs. Pitt.
MARGERY	Mrs. Wells.

LOVE IN A VILLAGE.

ACT I. SCENE I.

A garden with statues, fountains, and flower-pots. Several Arbours appear in the side scenes: ROSSETTA *and* LUCINDA *are discovered at work, seated upon two garden-chairs.*

AIR.

ROS. *HOPE! thou nurse of young desire,*
Fairy promiser of joy,
Painted vapour, glow-worm fire,
Temp'rate sweet, that ne'er can cloy:

LUC. *Hope! thou earnest of delight,*
Softest soother of the mind,
Balmy cordial, prospect bright,
Surest friend the wretched find:

Both. *Kind deceiver, flatter still,*
Deal out pleasures unpossest,
With thy dreams my fancy fill,
And in wishes make me blest.

Luc. Heigho!—*Rossetta?*

Ros. Well, child, what do you say?

Luc. 'Tis a devilish thing to live in a village a hundred miles from the capital, with a preposterous gouty father, and a super-annuated maiden aunt.—I am heartily sick of my situation.

Ros. And with reason—But 'tis in a great measure your own fault: here is this Mr. Eustace, a man of character and family; he likes you, you like him; you know one another's minds, and yet you will not resolve to make yourself happy with him.

AIR.

Whence can you inherit
So slavish a spirit?
Confin'd thus, and chain'd to a log!
Now fondled, now chid,
Permitted, forbid:
'Tis leading the life of a dog.

For shame, you a lover!
More firmness discover;
Take courage, nor here longer mope;

Resist and be free,
Run riot like me,
And, to perfect the picture, elope.

Luc. And is this your advice?

Ros. Positively.

Luc. Here's my hand; positively I'll follow it—I have already sent to my gentleman, who is now in the country, to let him know he may come hither this day; we will make use of the opportunity to settle all preliminaries—And then—But take notice, whenever we decamp, you march off along with us.

Ros. Oh! madam, your servant; I have no inclination to be left behind, I assure you—But you say you got acquainted with this spark, while you were with your mother during her last illness at Bath, so that your father has never seen him?

Luc. Never in his life, my dear; and, I am confident, he entertains not the least suspicion of my having any such connection: my aunt, indeed, has her doubts and surmises; but, besides that my father will not allow any one to be wiser than himself, it is an established maxim between these affectionate relations, never to agree in any thing.

Ros. Except being absurd; you must allow they sympathize perfectly in that—But, now we are on the subject, I desire to know, what I am to do with this wicked old justice of peace, this libidinous father of yours? He follows me about the house like a tame goat.

Luc. Nay, I'll assure you he hath been a rogue in his time—you must have a care of yourself.

Ros. Wretched me! to fall into such hands, who have been just forced to run away from my parents to avoid an odious marriage——You smile at that now; and I know you think me whimsical, as you have often told me; but you must excuse my being a little over-delicate in this particular.

AIR.

My heart's my own, my will is free,
And so shall be my voice;
No mortal man shall wed with me,
Till first he's made my choice.

Let parent's rule, cry nature's laws;
And children still obey;
And is there then no saving clause,
Against tyrannic sway?

Luc. Well, but my dear mad girl——

Ros. Lucinda, don't talk to me—Was your father to go to London; meet there by accident with an old fellow as wrong-headed as himself; and in a fit of absurd friendship, agree to marry you to that old fellow's son, whom you had never seen, without consulting your inclinations, or allowing you a negative, in case he should not prove agreeable——

Luc. Why I should think it a little hard. I con-

—yet, when I see you in the character of a chamber-maid—

Ros. It is the only character, my dear, in which I could hope to lie concealed; and, I can tell you, I was reduced to the last extremity, when in consequence of our old boarding-school friendship, I applied to you to receive me in this capacity: for we expected the parties the very next week.

Luc. But had not you a message from your intended spouse, to let you know he was as little inclined to such ill-concerted nuptials as you were?

Ros. More than so; he wrote to advise me, by all means, to contrive some method of breaking them off, for he had rather return to his dear studies at Oxford; and after that, what hopes could I have of being happy with him?

Luc. Then you are not at all uneasy at the strange rout you must have occasioned at home? I warrant, during this month you have been absent—

Ros. Oh! don't mention it, my dear; I have had so many admirers, since I commenced Abigail, that I am quite charmed with my situation—But hold, who stalks yonder in the yard, that the dogs are so glad to see?

Luc. Daddy Hawthorn, as I live! He is come to pay my father a visit; and never more luckily, for he always forces him abroad. By the way, what will you do with yourself while I step into the house to see after my trusty messenger, Hodge?

Ros. No matter, I'll sit down in that arbour, and listen to the singing of the birds: you know I am fond of melancholy amusements.

Luc. So it seems, indeed: sure, Rossetta, none of your admirers had power to touch your heart; you are not in love, I hope?

Ros. In love! that's pleasant: who do you suppose I should be in love with, pray?

Luc. Why, let me see——What do you think of Thomas, our gardener? There he is, at the other end of the walk—He's a pretty young man, and the servants say, he's always writing verses on you.

Ros. Indeed, Lucinda, you are very silly.

Luc. Indeed, Rossetta, that blush makes you look very handsome.

Ros. Blush? I am sure I don't blush.

Luc. Ha, ha, ha!

Ros. Pshaw, Lucinda, how can you be so ridiculous?

Luc. Well, don't be angry, and I have done—— But suppose you did like him, how could you help yourself?

AIR.

When once Love's subtile poison gains
A passage to the female breast,
Like lightning rushing through the veins,
Each wish, and every thought's pos sest:

To heal the pangs our minds endure,
Reason in vain its skill applies;
Nought can afford the heart a cure,
But what is pleasing to the eyes.

SCENE II.

Enter YOUNG MEADOWS.

Y. Mea. Let me see—on the fifteenth of June, at half an hour past five in the morning [*taking out a pocket book*] I left my father's house, unknown to any one, having made free with a coat and jacket of our gardener's, which fitted me, by way of a disguise: so says my pocket-book; and, chance directing me to this village, on the twentieth of the same month I procured a recommendation to the worshipful Justice Woodcock, to be the superintendant of his pumpkins and cabbages, because I would let my father see, I chose to run any lengths, rather than submit to what his obstinacy would have forced me, a marriage against my inclination, with a woman I never saw. [*Puts up the book, and takes up a watering-pot.*] Here I have been three weeks, and in that time I am as much altered, as if I changed my nature with my habit. 'Sdeath, to fall in love with a chambermaid! And yet, if I could forget that I am the son and heir of Sir William Meadows—But that's impossible. 163

AIR.

O! had I been by fate decreed
Some humble cottage swain;
In fair Rossetta's *sight to feed*
My sheep upon the plain;
What bliss had I been born to taste,
Which now I ne'er must know?
Ye envious pow'rs! why have ye plac'd
My fair one's lot so low?

Ha! who was it I had a glimpse of as I past by that arbour! Was it not she sat reading there! the trembling of my heart tells me my eyes were not mistaken —Here she comes.

SCENE III.

YOUNG MEADOWS, ROSSETTA.

Ros. Lucinda was certainly in the right of it, and yet I blush to own my weakness even to myself— Marry, hang the fellow for not being a gentleman.

Y. Mea. I am determined I won't speak to her [*turning to a rose-tree, and plucking the flowers.*] Now or never is the time to conquer myself: besides, I have some reason to believe the girl has no aversion to me: and, as I wish not to do her an injury, it would be cruel to fill her head with notions of wha

can never happen. [*hums a tune.*] Pshaw! rot these roses, how they prick one's fingers!

Ros. He takes no notice of me; but so much the better, I'll be as indifferent as he is. I am sure the poor lad likes me; and if I was to give him any encouragement, I suppose the next thing he talked of, would be buying a ring, and being asked in church—Oh, dear pride, I thank you for that thought. 191

Y. Mea. Hah, going without a word! a look! —I can't bear that—Mrs. Rossetta, I am gathering a few roses here, if you please to take them in with you.

Ros. Thank you, Mr. Thomas, but all my lady's flower-pots are full.

Y. Mea. Will you accept of them for yourself, then? [*catching hold of her.*] What's the matter? you look as if you were angry with me.

Ros. Pray let go my hand.

Y. Mea. Nay, pr'ythee, why is this? you shan't go, I have something to say to you.

Ros. Well, but I must go, I will go; I desire, Mr. Thomas—

AIR.

Gentle youth, ah, tell me why
Still you force me thus to fly?
Cease, oh! cease, to persevere;
Speak not what I must not hear;
To my heart its ease restore;
Go, and never see me more.

SCENE IV.

YOUNG MEADOWS.

This girl is a riddle—That she loves me, I think there is no room to doubt; she takes a thousand opportunities to let me see it: and yet, when I speak to her, she will hardly give me an answer; and, if I attempt the smallest familiarity, is gone in an instant—I feel my passion for her, grow every day more and more violent—Well, would I marry her?—would I make a mistress of her if I could?—Two things, called prudence and honour, forbid either. What am I pursuing, then? A shadow. Sure my evil genius laid this snare in my way. However, there is one comfort, it is in my power to fly from it; if so, why do I hesitate? I am distracted, unable to determine any thing.

AIR.

Still in hopes to get the better
Of my stubborn flame I try;
Swear this moment to forget her,
And the next my oath deny.
Now, prepar'd with scorn to treat her,
Ev'ry charm in thought I brave,
Boast my freedom, fly to meet her,
And confess myself a slave.

SCENE V.

A hall in Justice WOODCOCK'S *house. Enter* HAWTHORN, *with a fowling-piece in his hands, and a net with birds at his girdle: and, afterwards, Justice* WOODCOCK.

AIR.

There was a jolly miller once,
Liv'd on the river Dee;
He work'd and sung, from morn till night;
No lark more blythe than he.
And this the burthen of his song,
For ever us'd to be,——
I care for nobody, not I,
If no one cares for me.

House, here, house! what all gadding, all abroad! house, I say, hilli-ho, ho!

J. Wood. Here's a noise, here's a racket! William, Robert, Hodge! why does not somebody answer? Odds my life, I believe the fellows have lost their hearing! [*Entering*] Oh, master Hawthorn! I guessed it was some such mad cap—Are you there?

Haw. Am I here? Yes: and, if you had been where I was three hours ago, you would find the good effects of it by this time: but you have got the lazy unwholesome London fashion, of lying a bed in a

morning, and there's gout for you—Why, sir, I have not been in bed five minutes after sun-rise these thirty years, am generally up before it; and I never took a dose of physic but once in my life, and that was in compliment to a cousin of mine, an apothecary, that had just set up business.

J. Wood. Well but, master Hawthorn, let me tell you, you know nothing of the matter; for, I say, sleep is necessary for a man; ay, and I'll maintain it.

Haw. What, when I maintain the contrary?——— Look you, neighbour Woodcock, you are a rich man, a man of worship, a justice of peace, and all that; but learn to know the respect that is due to the sound from the infirm; and allow me that superiority a good constitution gives me over you—Health is the greatest of all possessions; and 'tis a maxim with me, that an hale cobler is a better man than a sick king.

J. Wood. Well, well, you are a sportsman.

Haw. And so would you too, if you would take my advice. A sportsman! why there is nothing like it: I would not exchange the satisfaction I feel, while I am beating the lawns and thickets about my little farm, for all the entertainments and pageantry in Christendom.

AIR.

Let gay ones and great
Make the most of their fate
From pleasure to pleasure they run:

Well, who cares a jot,
I envy them not,
While I have my dog and my gun.
For exercise, air,
To the fields I repair,
With spirits unclouded and light:
The blisses I find,
No stings leave behind,
But health and diversion unite.

SCENE VI.

JUSTICE WOODCOCK, HAWTHORN, HODGE.

Hodge. Did your worship call, sir?

J. Wood. Call, sir; where have you and the rest of these rascals been? but I suppose, I need not ask—You must know there is a statute, a fair for hiring servants, held upon my green to-day; we have it usually at this season of the year, and it never fails to put all the folks here-about out of their senses.

Hodge. Lord, your honour, look out, and see what a nice show they make yonder; they had got pipers, and fidlers, and were dancing as I came along, for dear life—I never saw such a mortal throng in our village in all my born days again.

Haw. Why, I like this now, this is as it should be.

J. Wood. No, no, 'tis a very foolish piece of business; good for nothing but to promote idleness and the getting of bastards: but I shall take measures for preventing it another year, and I doubt whether I am not sufficiently authorised already; for by an act passed *Anno undecimo Caroli primi*, which impowers a justice of peace, who is lord of the manor———

Haw. Come, come, never mind the act; let me tell you, this is a very proper, a very useful meeting; I want a servant or two myself, I must go see what your market affords;—and you shall go, and the girls, my little Lucy and the other young rogue, and we'll make a day on't as well as the rest.

J. Wood. I wish, master Hawthorn, I could teach you to be a little more sedate: why won't you take pattern by me, and consider your dignity?—Odds heart, I don't wonder you are not a rich man; you laugh too much ever to be rich.

Haw. Right, neighbour Woodcock! health, good-humour, and competence, is my motto: and, if my executors have a mind, they are welcome to make it my epitaph.

AIR.

The honest heart, whose thoughts are clear
From fraud, disguise, and guile,
Need neither fortune's frowning fear,
Nor court the harlot's smile.

The greatness that would make us grave
Is but an empty thing;
What more than mirth would mortals have?
The chearful man's a king.

SCENE VII.

LUCINDA, HODGE.

Luc. Hist, hist, Hodge!

Hodge. Who calls? here am I.

Luc. Well, have you been?

Hodge. Been, ay I ha' been far enough, an that be all: you never knew any thing fall out so crossly in your born days.

Luc. Why, what's the matter?

Hodge. Why you know, I dare not take a horse out of his worship's stables this morning, for fear it should be missed, and buzzed questions; and our old nag at home was so cruelly beat i'th'hoofs, that, poor beast, it had not a foot to set to ground; so I was fain to go to farmer Ploughshare's, at the Grange, to borrow the loan of his bald filly: and, would you think it? after walking all that way—de'el from me, if the cross-grained toad did not deny me the favour.

Luc. Unlucky!

Hodge. Well, then I went my ways to the King's-head in the village, but all their cattle were at plough:

and I was as far to seek below at the turnpike: so at last, for want of a better, I was forced to take up with dame Quickset's blind mare.

Luc. Oh, then you have been?

Hodge. Yes, yes, I ha' been.

Luc. Psha! Why did not you say so at once?

Hodge. Aye, but I have had a main tiresome jaunt on't, for she is a sorry jade at best.

Luc. Well, well, did you see Mr. Eustace, and what did he say to you?—Come, quick—have you e'er a letter?

Hodge. Yes, he gave me a letter, if I ha'na lost it.

Luc. Lost it, man!

Hodge. Nay, nay, have a bit of patience: adwawns, you are always in such a hurry [*rummaging his pockets*] I put it somewhere in this waistcoat pocket. Oh here it is.

Luc. So, give it me. [*reads the letter to herself.*]

Hodge. Lord-a-mercy! how my arm achs with beating that plaguy beast; I'll be hang'd if I won'na rather ha' thrash'd half a day, than ha' ridden her.

Luc. Well, Hodge, you have done your business very well.

Hodge. Well, have not I now?

Luc. Yes—Mr. Eustace tells me in this letter, that he will be in the green lane, at the other end of the village, by twelve o'clock—You know where he came before.

Hodge. Ay, ay.

Luc. Well, you must go there; and wait till he arrives, and watch your opportunity to introduce him, across the fields, into the little summer-house, on the left side of the garden.

Hodge. That's enough.

Luc. But take particular care that nobody sees you.

Hodge. I warrant you.

Luc. Nor for your life, drop a word of it to any mortal.

Hodge. Never fear me.

Luc. And Hodge———

AIR.

Hodge. *Well, well, say no more;*
Sure you told me before;
I see the full length of my teather;
Do you think I'm a fool,
That I need go to school?
I can spell you and put you together.

A word to the wise,
Will always suffice;
Addsniggers go talk to your parrot;
I'm not such an elfe,
Though I say it myself,
But I know a sheep's head from a carrot.

SCENE VIII.

LUCINDA.

How severe is my case! Here I am obliged to carry on a clandestine correspondence with a man in all respects my equal, because the oddity of my father's temper is such, that I dare not tell him I have ever yet seen the person I should like to marry—But perhaps he has quality in his eye, and hopes, one day or other, as I am his only child, to match me with a title—vain imagination!

AIR.

Cupid, God of soft persuasion,
Take the helpless lover's part:
Seize, oh seize some kind occasion,
To reward a faithful heart.

Justly those we tyrants call,
Who the body would enthral;
Tyrants of more cruel kind,
Those, who would enslave the mind.

What is grandeur? foe to rest,
Childish mummery at best.
Happy I in humble state;
Catch, ye fools, the glittering bait.

SCENE IX.

A field with a stile. Enter HODGE, *followed by* MARGERY; *and, some time after, enter* YOUNG MEADOWS.

Hodge. What does the wench follow me for? Odds flesh, folk may well talk, to see you dangling after me every where, like a tantony pig: find some other road, can't you; and don't keep wherreting me with your nonsense.

Mar. Nay, pray you, Hodge, stay, and let me speak to you a bit.

Hodge. Well; what sayn you?

Mar. Dear heart, how can you be so barbarous? and is this the way you serve me after all; and won't you keep your word, Hodge?

Hodge. Why no I won't, I tell you; I have chang'd my mind.

Mar. Nay but surely, surely—Consider Hodge, you are obligated in conscience to make me an honest woman.

Hodge. Obligated in conscience! How am I obligated?

Mar. Because you are; and none but the basest of rogues would bring a poor girl to shame, and afterwards leave her to the wide world.

Hodge. Bring you to shame! Don't make me speak, Madge, don't make me speak.

Mar. Yes do, speak your worst.

Hodge. Why then, if you go to that, you were run to leave your own village down in the West, for a bastard you had by the clerk of the parish, and I'll bring the man shall say it to your face.

Mar. No, no, Hodge, 'tis no such thing, 'tis a base lie of farmer Ploughshare's—But I know what makes you false-hearted to me, that you may keep company with young madam's waiting-woman, and I am sure she's no fit body for a poor man's wife.

Hodge. How should you know what she's fit for? She's fit for as much as you, mayhap; don't find fault with your betters, Madge. [*Seeing Young Meadows.*] Oh! master Thomas, I have a word or two to say to you; pray did not you go down the village one day last week with a basket of something upon your shoulder?

Y. Mea. Well, and what then?

Hodge. Nay, not much, only the ostler at the Green-man was saying, as how there was a passenger at their house as see'd you go by, and said he know'd you; and axt a mort of questions—So I thought I'd tell you.

Y. Mea. The devil! ask questions about me! I know nobody in this part of the country; there must be some mistake in it.—Come hither, Hodge.

Mar. A nasty ungrateful fellow, to use me at this rate, after being to him as I have.—Well, well, I

wish all poor girls would take warning by my mishap, never have nothing to say to none of them.

AIR.

How happy were my days, till now!
I ne'er did sorrow feel,
I rose with joy to milk my cow,
Or take my spinning-wheel.

My heart was lighter than a fly,
Like any bird I sung,
Till he pretended love, and I
Believ'd his flatt'ring tongue.

Oh the fool, the silly silly fool,
Who trusts what man may be;
I wish I was a maid again,
And in my own country.

SCENE X.

A green with the prospect of a village, and the representation of a statute or fair. Enter JUSTICE WOODCOCK, HAWTHORN, *Mrs.* DEBORAH WOODCOCK, LUCINDA, ROSSETTA, *Young* MEADOWS, HODGE, *and several country people.*

Hodge. This way, your worship, this way. Why don't you stand aside there? Here's his worship a coming.

Countrymen. His worship!

J. Wood. Fye, fye, what a croud's this! Odd, I'll put some of them in the stocks. [*Striking a fellow*] Stand out of the way, sirrah.

Haw. For shame, neighbour. Well, my lad, are you willing to serve the king?

Countryman. Why, can you list ma! Serve the king, master! no, no, I pay the king, that's enough for me. Ho, ho, ho!

Haw. Well said, Sturdy-boots.

J. Wood. Nay, if you talk to them, they'll answer you.

Haw. I would have them do so, I like they should. —Well, madam, is not this a fine sight? I did not know my neighbour's estate had been so well peopled. —Are all these his own tenants?

Mrs. Deb. More than are good of them, Mr. Hawthorn. I don't like to see such a parcel of young hussys fleering with the fellows.

Haw. There's a lass [*beck'ning to a country girl.*] Come hither, my pretty maid. What brings you here? [*Chucking her under the chin.*] Do you come to look for a service?

C. Girl. Yes, an't please you.

Haw. Well, and what place are you for?

C. Girl. All work, an't please you.

J. Wood. Ay, ay, I don't doubt it; any work you'll put her to.

Mrs. Deb. She looks like a brazen one—Go, hussy,

Haw. Here's another. [*Catching a girl that goes by.*] [illegible]t health, what bloom!—This is Nature's work; no art, no daubing. Don't be ashamed, child; those cheeks of thine are enough to put a whole drawing-room out of countenance.

SCENE XI.

JUSTICE WOODCOCK, HAWTHORN, *Mrs.* DEBORAH WOODCOCK, LUCINDA, ROSSETTA, YOUNG MEADOWS, HODGE, *and men and women servants.*

Hodge. Now, your honour, now the sport will come. The gut-scrapers are here, and some among them are going to sing and dance. Why there's not the like of our statute, mun, in five counties; others are but fools to it.

Servant-man. Come, good people, make a ring, and stand out, fellow servants, as many of you as are willing, and able to bear a bob. We'll let my masters and mistresses see we can do something at least; if they won't hire us, it shan't be our fault. Strike up the Servants Medley.

AIR.

HOUSE-MAID.

[illegible]*ray ye, gentles, list to me.*
I'm young, and strong, and clean you see;

I'll not turn tail to any she,
For work that's in the country.
Of all your house the charge I take,
I wash, I scrub, I brew, I bake;
And more can do than here I'll speak,
Depending on your bounty.

FOOTMAN.

Behold a blade, who knows his trade
In chamber, hall, and entry:
And what tho' here I now appear,
I've serv'd the best of gentry.
A footman would you have
I can dress, and comb, and shave;
For I a handy lad am:
On a message I can go,
And slip a billet-doux,
With your humble servant, madam.

COOK-MAID.

Who wants a good cook, my hand they must cross;
For plain wholesome dishes I'm ne'er at a loss;
And what are your soups, your ragouts, and your sauce,
Compar'd to old English roast beef?

CARTER.

If you want a young man, with a true honest heart,
Who knows how to manage a plough and a cart,

Here's one for your purpose, come take me and try;
You'll say you ne'er met with a better nor I,
Ge ho Dobbin, &c.

CHORUS.

My masters and mistresses, hither repair;
What servants you want, you'll find in our fair;
Men and Maids fit for all sorts of stations there be;
And, as for the wages, we shan't disagree.

ACT II. SCENE I.

A Parlour in JUSTICE WOODCOCK's *House.*

LUCINDA, EUSTACE.

Lucinda.

WELL, am not I a bold adventurer, to bring you into my father's house at noon-day? Though, to say the truth, we are safer here than in the garden; for there is not a human creature under the roof besides ourselves.

Eust. Then why not put our scheme into execution this moment? I have a post-chaise ready.

Luc. Fye: how can you talk so lightly? I protest I am afraid to have any thing to do with you; your passion seems too much founded on appetite; and my aunt Deborah says—

Eust. What! by all the rapture my heart now feels—

Luc. Oh to be sure, promise and vow; it sounds prettily, and never fails to impose upon a fond female.

AIR.

We women like weak Indians trade,
Whose judgment tinsel shew decoys;
Dupes to our folly we are made,
While artful man the gain enjoys:
We give our treasure, to be paid
A paltry, poor return! in toys.

Eust. Well, I see you've a mind to divert yourself with me; but I wish I could prevail on you to be a little serious.

Luc. Seriously then, what would you desire me to say? I have promised to run away with you; which is as great a concession as any reasonable lover can expect from his mistress.

Eust. Yes; but, you dear provoking angel, you have not told me, when you will run away with me.

Luc. Why that, I confess, requires some consideration.

Eust. Yet remember, while you are deliberating, the season, now so favourable to us, may elapse, never to return.

AIR.

Think, my fairest, how delay
Danger every moment brings;
Time flies swift, and will away;
Time that's ever on its wings;
Doubting and suspence at best,
Lovers late repentance cost;
Let us, eager to be blest,
Seize occasion e'er 'tis lost.

SCENE II.

LUCINDA, EUSTACE, JUSTICE WOODCOCK, *Mrs.* DEBORAH WOODCOCK.

J. Wood. Why, here is nothing in the world in this house but cater-wauling from morning till night, nothing but cater-wauling. Hoity toity; who have we here?

Luc. My father, and my aunt!

Eust. The devil! What shall we do?

Luc. Take no notice of them, only observe me. (*Speaks aloud to* Eustace.) Upon my word, Sir, I don't know what to say to it, unless the Justice was at home; he is just stepp'd into the village with some company; but, if you'll sit down a moment, I dare swear he will return.—(*pretends to see the Justice*)—O! Sir, here is my papa!

J. Wood. Here is your papa, hussy! Who's this you have got with you? Hark you, sirrah, who are you, ye dog? and what's your business here?

Eust. Sir, this is a language I am not used to.

J. Wood. Don't answer me, you rascal—I am a justice of the peace; and if I hear a word out of your mouth, I'll send you to jail, for all your lac'd hat.

Mrs. Deb. Send him to jail, brother, that's right.

J. Wood. And how do you know it's right? How should you know any thing's right?—Sister Deborah, you are never in the right.

Mrs. Deb. Brother, this is the man I have been telling you about so long.

J. Wood. What man, goody Wise-acre!

Mrs. Deb. Why, the man your daughter has an intrigue with: but I hope you will not believe it now, though you see it with your own eyes—Come, hussy, confess, and don't let your father make a fool of himself any longer.

Luc. Confess what, aunt? This gentleman is a music-master: he goes about the country, teaching ladies to play and sing; and has been recommended to instruct me: I could not turn him out when he came to offer his service; and did not know what answer to give him till I saw my papa.

J. Wood. A music-master!

Eust. Yes, Sir, that's my profession.

Mrs Deb. It's a lye, young man; it's a lye. Brother, he is no more a music-master, than I am a music-master.

J. Wood. What then, you know better than the fellow himself, do you? and you will be wiser than all the world?

Mrs. Deb. Brother, he does not look like a music-master.

J. Wood. He does not look! ha! ha! ha! Was ever such a poor stupe! Well, and what does he look like, then? But I suppose you mean, he is not dressed like a music-master, because of his ruffles, and this bit of garnishing about his coat—which seems to be copper too—Why, you silly wretch, these whipper-snappers set up for gentlemen, now-a-days, and give themselves as many airs as if they were people of quality.—Hark you, friend, I suppose you don't come within the vagrant act? You have some settled habitation—Where do you live?

Mrs. Deb. It's an easy matter for him to tell you a wrong place.

J. Wood. Sister Deborah, don't provoke me.

Mrs. Deb. I wish, brother, you would let me examine him a little.

J. Wood. You shan't say a word to him, you shan't say a word to him.

Mrs. Deb. She says he was recommended here, brother; ask him by whom?

J. Wood. No, I won't now, because you desire it.

Luc. If my papa did ask the question, aunt, it would be very easily resolved.

Mrs. Deb. Who bid you speak, Mrs. Nimble Chops?

I suppose the man has a tongue in his head to answer for himself.

J. Wood. Will nobody stop that prating old woman's mouth for me? Get out of the room.

Mrs. Deb. Well, so I can, brother; I don't want to stay: but, remember, I tell you, you will make yourself ridiculous in this affair: for, through your own obstinacy, you will have your daughter run away with, before your face.

J. Wood. My daughter! who will run away with my daughter?

Mrs. Deb. That fellow will.

J. Wood. Go, go, you are a wicked, censorious woman.

Luc. Why, sure, madam, you must think me very coming, indeed.

J. Wood. Ay, she judges of others by herself; I remember when she was a girl: her mother dared not trust her the length of her apron-string; she was clambering upon every fellow's back.

Mrs. Deb. I was not.

J. Wood. You were.

Luc. Well, but why so violent?

AIR.

Believe me, dear aunt,
If you rave thus, and rant,
You'll never a lover persuade;
The men will all fly,
And leave you to die,
Oh, terrible chance! an old maid.

How happy the lass,
Must she come to this pass,
Who ancient virginity 'scapes!
'Twere better on earth
Have five brats at a birth,
Than in hell be a leader of apes.

SCENE III.

JUSTICE WOODCOCK, LUCINDA, EUSTACE.

J. Wood. Well done, Lucy, send her about her business; a troublesome, foolish creature, does she think I want to be directed by her?—Come hither, my lad, you look tolerable honest.

Eust. I hope, sir, I shall never give you cause to alter your opinion.

J. Wood. No, no, I am not easily deceived, I am generally pretty right in my conjectures.——You must know, I had once a little notion of music myself, and learned upon the fiddle; I could play the Trumpet Minuet, and Buttered Peas, and two or three tunes. I remember, when I was in London, about thirty years ago, there was a song, a great favourite at our club at Nando's coffee-house; Jack Pickle used to sing it for us, a droll fish! but 'tis an old thing, I dare swear you have heard of it often.

AIR.

When I followed a lass that was froward and shy,
Oh! I stuck to her stuff, till I made her comply;
Oh! I took her so lovingly round the waist,
And I smack'd her lips and held her fast:
When hugg'd and haul'd,
She squeal'd and squall'd;
But, though she vow'd all I did was in vain,
Yet I pleas'd her so well that she bore it again:
Then hoity, toity,
Whisking, and frisking,
Green was her gown upon the grass;
Oh! such were the joys of our dancing days.

Eust. Very well, Sir, upon my word.

J. Wood. No, no, I forget all those things now; but I could do a little at them once;—Well, stay and eat your dinner, and we'll talk about your teaching the girl—Lucy, take your master to your spinnet, and shew him what you can do—I must go and give some orders; *then hoity, toity*, &c.

SCENE IV.

LUCINDA, EUSTACE.

Luc. My sweet, pretty papa, your most obedient humble servant; hah, hah, hah! was ever so

whimsical an accident? Well, sir, what do think of this?

Eust. Think of it! I am in a maze.

Luc. O your awkwardness! I was frightened out of my wits, lest you should not take the hint; and, if I had not turned matters so cleverly, we should have been utterly undone.

Eust. 'Sdeath! why would you bring me into the house? we could expect nothing else: besides, since they did surprise us, it would have been better to have discovered the truth.

Luc. Yes, and never have seen one another afterwards. I know my father better than you do; he has taken it into his head, I have no inclination for a husband; and let me tell you, that is our best security; for if once he has said a thing, he will not be easily persuaded to the contrary.

Eust. And pray what am I to do now?

Luc. Why, as I think all danger is pretty well over, since he hath invited you to dinner with him, stay; only be cautious of your behaviour; and, in the mean time, I will consider what is next to be done.

Eust. Had not I better go to your father?

Luc. Do so, while I endeavour to recover myself a little out of the flurry this affair has put me in.

Eust. Well, but what sort of a parting is this, without so much as your servant, or good bye to you? No ceremony at all? Can you afford me no token to keep up my spirits till I see you again?

Luc. Ah, childish!

Eust. My angel! 219

AIR.

Eust. *Let rakes and libertines, resign'd*
To sensual pleasures, range!
Here all the sex's charms I find,
And ne'er can cool or change.

Luc. *Let vain coquets and prudes conceal*
What most their hearts desire;
With pride my passion I reveal,
Oh! may it ne'er expire.

Both. *The sun shall cease to spread its light,*
The stars their orbits leave,
And fair creation sink in night,
When I my dear deceive.

SCENE V.

A Garden.

Enter ROSETTA, *musing.*

Ros. If ever poor creature was in a pitiable condition, surely I am. The devil take this fellow, I cannot get him out of my head; and yet I would fain persuade myself I don't care for him: well but sure-

ly I am not in love: let me examine my heart a little: I saw him kissing one of the maids the other day; I could have boxed his ears for it, and have done nothing but find fault and quarrel with the girl ever since. Why was I uneasy at his toying with another woman? what was it to me?—Then I dream of him almost every night—but that may proceed from his being generally uppermost in my thoughts all day: Oh! worse and worse!—Well, he is certainly a pretty lad; he has something uncommon about him, considering his rank:—And now, let me only put the case, if he was not a servant, would I, or would I not, prefer him to all the men I ever saw? Why, to be sure, if he was not a servant—In short, I'll ask myself no more questions, for the further I examine, the less reason I shall have to be satisfied.

AIR.

How bless'd the maid, whose bosom
No head-strong passion knows;
Her days in joy she passes,
Her nights in calm repose.
Where'er her fancy leads her,
No pain, no fear invades her;
But pleasure,
Without measure,
From ev'ry object flows.

SCENE VI.

YOUNG MEADOWS, ROSSETTA.

Y. Mea. Do you come into the garden, Mrs. Rossetta, to put my lilies and roses out of countenance; or, to save me the trouble of watering my flowers, by reviving them? The sun seems to have hid himself a little, to give you an opportunity of supplying his place.

Ros. Where could he get that now? he never read it in the Academy of Compliments.

Y. Mea. Come, don't affect to treat me with contempt; I can suffer any thing better than that; in short, I love you; there is no more to be said: I am angry with myself for it, and strive all I can against it; but, in spite of myself, I love you.

AIR.

In vain, I ev'ry art essay,
To pluck the venom'd shaft away,
That rankles in my heart:
Deep in the centre fix'd and bound—
My efforts but enlarge the wound,
And fiercer make the smart.

Ros. Really, Mr. Thomas, this is very improper language; it is what I don't understand; I can't suffer it, and, in short, I don't like it.

Y. Mea. Perhaps you don't like me.

Ros. Well, perhaps I don't.

Y. Mea. Nay, but 'tis not so; come, confess you love me.

Ros. Confess! indeed I shall confess no such thing: besides, to what purpose should I confess it?

Y. Mea. Why, as you say, I don't know to what purpose; only, it would be a satisfaction to me to hear you say so; that's all.

Ros. Why, if I did love you, I can assure you, you wou'd never be the better for it—Women are apt enough to be weak; we cannot always answer for our inclinations, but it is in our power not to give way to them; and, if I was so silly; I say, if I was so indiscreet, which I hope I am not, as to entertain an improper regard, when people's circumstances are quite unsuitable, and there are obstacles in the way that cannot be surmounted—

Y. Mea. Oh! to be sure, Mrs. Rossetta, to be sure: you are entirely in the right of it—I—know very well, you and I can never come together.

Ros. Well then, since that is the case, as I assure you it is, I think we had better behave accordingly.

Y. Mea. Suppose we make a bargain, then, never to speak to one another any more?

Ros. With all my heart.

Y. Mea. Nor look at, nor, if possible, think of, one another?

Ros. I am very willing.

Y. Mea. And, as long as we stay in the house together, never to take any notice?

Ros. It is the best way.

Y. Mea. Why, I believe it is—Well, Mrs. Rossetta——

AIR.

Ros. *Begone——I agree*
From this moment we're free:
Already the matter I've sworn:
Y. Mea. *Yet let me complain*
Of the fates that ordain—
A trial so hard to be borne.
Ros. *When things are not fit,*
We should calmly submit;
No cure in reluctance we find:
Y. Mea. *Then thus I obey,*
Tear you image away,
And banish you quite from my mind.

Ros. Well, now, I think, I am somewhat easier: I am glad I have come to this explanation with him, because it puts an end to things at once.

Y. Mea. Hold, Mrs. Rossetta, pray stay a moment—The airs this girl gives herself are intolerable: I find now the cause of her behaviour; she despises the meanness of my condition, thinking a gardener below the notice of a lady's waiting-woman: 'sdeath, I have a good mind to discover myself to her.

Ros. Poor wretch! he does not know what to make

of it: I believe he is heartily mortified, but I must not pity him.

Y. Mea. It shall be so: I will discover myself to her, and leave the house directly—.Mrs. Rossetta—[*starting back.*]—Pox on it, yonder's the Justice come into the garden!

Ros. O Lord! he will walk round this way; pray go about your business; I would not for the world he should see us together.

Y. Mea. The devil take him: he's gone across the parterre, and can't hobble here this half hour: I must and will have a little conversation with you.

Ros. Some other time.

Y. Mea. This evening, in the green-house, at the lower end of the canal; I have something to communicate to you of importance. Will you meet me there?

Ros. Meet you!

Y. Mea. Ay; I have a secret to tell you; and I swear, from that moment, there shall be an end of every thing betwixt us.

Ros. Well, well, pray leave me now.

Y. Mea. You'll come then?

Ros. I don't know, perhaps I may.

Y. Mea. Nay, but promise.

Ros. What signifies promising; I may break my promise—but, I tell you, I will.

Y. Mea. Enough—Yet, before I leave you, let me desire you to believe I love you more than ever man

loved woman; and that when I relinquish you, I give up all that can make my life supportable.

AIR.

Oh! how shall I, in language weak,
My ardent passion tell;
Or form my falt'ring tongue to speak,
That cruel word, Farewel?
Farewel—but know, tho' thus we part,
My thoughts can never stray:
Go where I will, my constant heart
Must with my charmer stay.

SCENE VII.

ROSSETTA, JUSTICE WOODCOCK.

Ros. What can this be that he wants to tell me? I have a strange curiosity to hear it, methinks—well—

J. Wood. Hem! hem! Rossetta!

Ros. So, I thought the devil would throw him in my way; now for a courtship of a different kind; but I'll give him a surfeit—Did you call me, Sir?

J. Wood. Ay, where are you running so fast?

Ros. I was only going into the house, Sir.

J. Wood. Well, but come here: come here, I say. [*Looking about.*] How do you do, Rossetta?

Ros. Thank you, sir, pretty well.

J. Wood. Why you look as fresh and bloomy to-day—Adad, you little slut, I believe you are painted.

Ros. O sir! you are pleased to compliment.

J. Wood. Adad, I believe you are—let me try—

Ros. Lord, sir!

J. Wood. What brings you into this garden so often, Rossetta? I hope you don't get eating green fruit and trash; or have you a hankering after some lover in dowlas, who spoils my trees by engraving true-lovers knots on them, with your horn and buck-handled knives? I see your name written upon the ceiling of the servants hall, with the smoak of a candle; and I suspect——

Ros. Not me, I hope, sir—No, sir; I am of another guess mind, I assure you; for, I have heard say, men are false and fickle——

J. Wood. Ay, that's your flanting, idle, young fellows; so they are: and they are so damn'd impudent, I wonder a woman will have any thing to say to them; besides, all that they want is something to brag of, and tell again.

Ros. Why, I own, Sir, if ever I was to make a slip, it should be with an elderly gentleman—about seventy, or seventy-five years of age.

J. Wood. No, child, that's out of reason; though I have known many a man turned of three-score with a hale constitution.

Ros. Then, Sir, he should be troubled with the gout, have a good strong, substantial, winter cough—and

I should not like him the worse—if he had a small touch of the rheumatism.

J. Wood. Pho, pho, Rossetta, this is jesting.

Ros. No, Sir, every body has a taste, and I have mine.

J. Wood. Well, but Rossetta, have you thought of what I was saying to you?

Ros. What was it, Sir?

J. Wood. Ah! you know, you know, well enough, hussy.

Ros. Dear sir, consider "my soul; would you have "me endanger my soul?

J. Wood. "No, no—Repent.

Ros. "Besides, Sir, consider," what has a poor servant to depend on but her character? And, I have heard, you gentlemen will talk one thing before, and another after.

J. Wood. I tell you again, these are the idle, flashy young dogs: but when you have to do with a staid, sober man——

Ros. And a magistrate, sir!

J. Wood. Right; it's quite a different thing——— Well, shall we, Rossetta, shall we?

Ros. Really, Sir, I don't know what to say to it.

AIR.

Young I am, and sore afraid:
Won'd you hurt a harmless maid?
Lead an innocent astray?
Tempt me not, kind Sir, I pray.

Men too often we believe:
And, should you my faith deceive,
Ruin first and then forsake,
Sure my tender heart wou'd break.

J. Wood. Why, you silly girl, I won't do you any harm.

Ros. Won't you, Sir?

J. Wood. Not I.

Ros. But won't you indeed, Sir?

J. Wood. Why I tell you I won't.

Ros. Ha, ha, ha!

J. Wood. Hussy, Hussy!

Ros. Ha, ha, ha!—Your servant, Sir, your servant.

J. Wood. Why, you impudent, audacious—

SCENE VIII.

JUSTICE WOODCOCK, HAWTHORN!

Haw. So, so, justice at odds with gravity! his worship playing at romps!—Your servant, sir.

J. Wood. Haw: friend Hawthorn!

Haw. I hope I don't spoil sport, neighbour: I thought I had the glimpse of a petticoat as I came in here.

J. Wood. Oh! the maid. Ay, she has been gathering a sallad—But come hither, master Hawthorn,

and I'll shew you some alterations I intend to make in my garden.

Haw. No, no, I am no judge of it; besides, I want to talk to you a little more about this—Tell me, Sir Justice, were you helping your maid to gather a sallad here, or consulting her taste in your improvements, eh? Ha, ha, ha! Let me see, all among the roses; egad, I like your notion: but you look a little blank upon it: you are ashamed of the business, then, are you?

AIR.

Oons! neighbour, ne'er blush for a trifle like this;
What harm with a fair one to toy and to kiss?
The greatest and gravest—a truce with grimace—
Would do the same thing, were they in the same place.

No age, no profession, no station is free;
To sovereign beauty mankind bends the knee:
That power, resistless, no strength can oppose,
We all love a pretty girl——under the rose.

J. Wood. I profess, master Hawthorn, this is all Indian, all Cherokee language to me; I don't understand a word of it.

Haw. No, may be not: well, Sir, will you read this letter, and try whether you can understand that? it is just brought by a servant, who stays for an answer.

J. Wood. A letter, and to me? [*taking the letter.*] Yes, it is to me; and yet I am sure it comes from no correspondent, that I know of. Where are my spectacles? not but I can see very well without them, master Hawthorn; but this seems to be a sort of a crabbed hand.

SIR,

I am ashamed of giving you this trouble; but, I am informed there is an unthinking boy, a son of mine, now disguised and in your service, in the capacity of a gardener: Tom *is a little wild, but an honest lad, and no fool either, though I am his father that say it.* Tom—oh, this is *Thomas*, our gardener; I always thought that he was a better man's child than he appeared to be, though I never mentioned it.

Haw. Well, well, Sir, pray let's hear the rest of the letter.

J. Wood. Stay, where is the place? Oh, here:—*I am come in quest of my run-away, and write this at an inn in your village, while I am swallowing a morsel of dinner: because, not having the pleasure of your acquaintance, I did not care to intrude, without giving you notice* (Whoever this person is, he understands good manners). *I beg leave to wait on you, Sir; but desire you would keep my arrival a secret, particularly from the young man.*

WILLIAM MEADOWS.

I'll assure you, a very well worded, civil letter.

Do you know any thing of the person who writes it, neighbour?

Haw. Let me consider—Meadows—by dad I believe it is Sir William Meadows of Northamptonshire; and, now I remember, I heard, sometime ago, that the heir of that family had absconded, on account of a marriage that was disagreeable to him. It is a good many years since I have seen Sir William, but we were once well acquainted: and, if you please, Sir, I will go and conduct him to the house.

J. Wood. Do so, master Hawthorn, do so——But, pray what sort of a man is this Sir William Meadows? Is he a wise man?

Haw. There is no occasion for a man that has five thousand pounds a year, to be a conjuror; but I suppose you ask that question because of this story about his son; taking it for granted, that wise parents make wise children.

J. Wood. No doubt of it, master Hawthorn, no doubt of it—I warrant we shall find now, that this young rascal has fallen in love with some mynx, against his father's consent—Why Sir, if I had as many children as king Priam had, that we read of at school, in the destruction of Troy, not one of them should serve me so.

Haw. Well, well, neighbour, perhaps not; but we should remember when we were young ourselves; and I was as likely to play an old don such a trick in my day, as e'er a spark in the hundred; nay between

you and me, I had done it once, had the wench been as willing as I.

AIR.

My Dolly *was the fairest thing!*
Her breath disclos'd the sweets of spring;
And if for summer you wou'd seek,
'Twas painted in her eye, her cheek;
Her swelling bosom, tempting ripe,
Of fruitful autumn was the type:
But, when my tender tale I told,
I found her heart was winter cold.

J. Wood. Ah, you were always a scape-grace rattle-cap.

Haw. Odds heart, neighbour Woodcock, don't tell me, young fellows will be young fellows, though we preach till we're hoarse again; and so there's an end on't.

SCENE IX.

JUSTICE WOODCOCK'S *Hall.*

HODGE, MARGERY.

Hodge. So, mistress, who let you in?

Mar. Why, I let myself in.

Hodge. Indeed! Marry come up! why, then pray let yourself out again. Times are come to a pretty pass; I think you might have had the manners to knock at the door first—What does the wench stand for?

Mar. I want to know if his worship's at home.

Hodge. Well, what's your business with his worship?

Mar. Perhaps you will hear that—Look ye, Hodge, it does not signify talking, I am come, once for all, to know what you intends to do; for I won't be made a fool of any longer.

Hodge. You won't.

Mar. No, that's what I won't, by the best man that ever wore a head; I am the make-game of the whole village upon your account; and I'll try whether your master gives you toleration in your doings.

Hodge. You will?

Mar. Yes that's what I will; his worship shall be acquainted with all your pranks, and see how you will like to be sent for a soldier.

Hodge. There's the door; take a friend's advice and go about your business.

Mar. My business is with his worship; and I won't go till I sees him.

Hodge. Look you, Madge, if you make any of your orations here, never stir if I don't set the dogs at you—Will you be gone?

Mar. I won't.

Hodge. Here Towzer, [*whistling.*] whu, whu, whu.

AIR.

Was ever poor fellow so plagu'd with a vixen?
Zawns! Madge don't provoke me, but mind what I say;
You've chose a wrong parson for playing your tricks on,
So pack up your alls and be trudging away:
You'd better be quiet,
And not breed a riot;
S'blood, must I stand prating with you here all day?
I've got other matters to mind;
May hap you may think me an ass,
But to the contrary you'll find:
A fine piece of work by the mass!

SCENE X.

ROSSETTA, HODGE, MARGERY.

Ros. Sure I heard the voice of discord here—as I live, an admirer of mine, and, if I mistake not, a rival—I'll have some sport with them—how now, fellow-servant, what's the matter?

Hodge. Nothing, Mrs. Rossetta, only this young woman wants to speak with his worship—Madge follow me.

Mar. No, Hodge, this is your fine madam; but I am as good flesh and blood as she, and have as clear

a skin too, tho'f I mayn't go so gay; and now she's here, I'll tell her a piece of my mind.

Hodge. Hold your tongue, will you?

Mar. No, I'll speak if I die for it.

Ros. What's the matter, I say?

Hodge. Why nothing I tell you;—Madge—

Mar. Yes, but it is something, it's all along of she, and she may be ashamed of herself.

Ros. Bless me, child, do you direct your discourse to me?

Mar. Yes, I do, and to nobody else; there was not a kinder soul breathing than he was till of late; I had never a cross word from him till he kept you company, but all the girls about say, there is no such thing as keeping a sweetheart for you.

Ros. Do you hear this, friend Hodge?

Hodge. Why, you don't mind she, I hope; but if that vexes her, I do like you, I do; my mind runs upon nothing else; and if so be as you was agreeable to it, I would marry you to-night, before to-morrow.

Mar. You're a nasty monkey, you are parjur'd, you know you are, and you deserve to have your eyes tore out.

Hodge. Let me come at her—I'll teach you to call names, and abuse folk.

Mar. Do; strike me;—you a man!

Ros. Hold, hold—we shall have a battle here presently, and I may chance to get my cap tore off——

Never exasperate a jealous woman, 'tis taking a mad bull by the horns—Leave me to manage her.

Hodge. You manage her! I'll kick her.

Ros. No, no, it will be more for my credit, to get the better of her by fair means—I warrant I'll bring her to reason.

Hodge. Well, do so then—But may I depend upon you? when shall I speak to the parson?

Ros. We'll talk of that another time—Go.

Hodge. Madge, good bye.

Ros. The brutality of this fellow shocks me!—Oh man, man—you are all alike—A bumkin here, bred at the barn-door! had he been brought up in a court, could he have been more fashionably vicious; shew me the lord, 'squire, colonel, or captain of them all, can out-do him.

AIR.

Cease, gay seducer, pride to take,
In triumphs o'er the fair;
Since clowns as well can act the rake,
As those in higher sphere.

Where then to shun a shameful fate
Shall helpless beauty go?
In ev'ry rank, in ev'ry state,
Poor woman finds a foe.

SCENE XI.

ROSSETTA, MARGERY.

Mar. I am ready to burst, I can't stay in the place any longer.

Ros. Hold, child, come hither.

Mar. Don't speak to me, don't you.

Ros. Well, but I have something to say to you of consequence, and that will be for your good; I suppose this fellow promised you marriage.

Mar. Ay, or he should never have prevail'd upon me. 681

Ros. Well, now you see the ill consequence of trusting to such promises: when once a man hath cheated a woman of her virtue, she has no longer hold of him; he despises her for wanting that which he hath robb'd her of; and, like a lawless conqueror, triumphs in the ruin he hath occasioned.

Mar. Nan!

Ros. However, I hope the experience you have got, though somewhat dearly purchased, will be of use to you for the future; and, as to any designs I have upon the heart of your lover, you may make yourself easy, for I assure you, I shall be no dangerous rival; so go your ways and be a good girl.

Mar. Yes—I don't very well understand her talk, but I suppose that's as much as to say, she'll keep him

herself; well let her, who cares? I don't fear getting better nor he is any day of the year, for the matter o' that; and I have a thought come into my head that, may be, will be more to my advantage.

AIR.

Since Hodge proves ungrateful, no further I'll seek,
But go up to the town in the waggon next week;
A service in London is no such disgrace,
And Register's office will get me a place:
Bet Blossom went there, and soon met with a friend;
Folks say in her silks she's now standing an end!
Then why should not I the same maxim pursue,
And better my fortune as other girls do?

SCENE XII.

Enter ROSSETTA *and* LUCINDA.

Ros. Ha! ha! ha! Oh admirable, most delectably ridiculous. And so your father is content he should be a music-master, and will have him such, in spite of all your aunt can say to the contrary?

Luc. My father and he, child, are the best companions you ever saw: and have been singing together the most hideous duets! Bobbing Joan, and Old Sir Simon the King: Heaven knows where Eustace could pick them up; but he has gone thro'

half the contents of Pills to purge Melancholy with him.

Ros. And have you resolved to take wing to-night.

Luc. This very night, my dear: my swain will go from hence this evening, but no farther than the inn, where he has left his horses; and, at twelve precisely, he will be with a post-chaise at the little gate that opens from the lawn into the road, where I have promised to meet him.

Ros. Then depend upon it, I'll bear you company.

Luc. We shall slip out when the family are asleep, and I have prepared Hodge already. Well, I hope we shall be happy.

Ros. Never doubt it.

AIR.

In love should there meet a fond pair,
Untutor'd by fashion or art;
Whose wishes are warm and sincere,
Whose words are th' excess of the heart:

If ought of substantial delight,
On this side the stars can be found,
'Tis sure when that couple unite,
And Cupid by Hymen is crown'd.

SCENE XIII.

ROSSETTA, LUCINDA, HAWTHORN.

Haw. Lucy, where are you?

Luc. Your pleasure, sir.

Ros. Mr. Hawthorn, your servant.

Haw. What my little water-wagtail!—The very couple I wish'd to meet: come hither both of you.

Ros. Now, Sir, what would you say to both of us?

Haw. Why, let me look at you a little—have you got on your best gowns, and your best faces? If not, go and trick yourselves out directly, for I'll tell you a secret—there will be a young batchelor in the house, within these three hours, that may fall to the share of one of you, if you look sharp—but whether mistress or maid——

Ross. Ay, marry, this is something; but how do you know whether either mistress or maid will think him worth acceptance?

Haw. Follow me, follow me; I warrant you.

Luc. I can assure you, Mr. Hawthorn, I am very difficult to please.

Ros. And so am I, Sir.

Haw. Indeed!

AIR.

Well come, let us hear what the swain must possess
Who may hope at your feet to implore with success?

Ros. *He must be first of all*
Straight, comely, and tall:
Luc. *Neither awkward,*
Ros. *Nor foolish,*
Luc. *Nor apish,*
Ros. *Nor mulish;*
Luc. Ros. } *Nor yet should his fortune be small.*
Haw. *What think'st of a captain?*
Luc. *All bluster and wounds!*
Haw. *What think'st of a 'squire?*
Ros. *To be left for his hounds.*
Luc. } *The youth that is form'd to my mind,*
Must be gentle, obliging and kind;
Of all things in nature love me;
Ros. } *Have sense both to speak and to see—*
Yet sometimes be silent and blind.
Haw. } *'Fore George a most rare matrimonial receipt;*
Ros. } *Observe it, ye fair, in the choice of a mate;*
Luc. } *Remember, 'tis wedlock determines your fate.*

ACT III. SCENE I.

A parlour in JUSTICE WOODCOCK's *house.* *Enter Sir* WILLIAM MEADOWS, *followed by* HAWTHORN.

Sir William.

WELL, this is excellent, this is mighty good, this is mighty merry, faith; ha! ha! ha! was ever the like heard of? that my boy, Tom, should run away from me, for fear of being forced to marry a girl he never saw? that she should scamper from her father, for fear of being forced to marry him; and that they should run into one another's arms this way in disguise, by mere accident; against their consents, and without knowing it, as a body may say! May I never do an ill turn, master Hawthorn, if it is not one of the oddest adventures partly—

Haw. Why, Sir William, it is a romance; a novel; a pleasanter history by half, than the loves of Dorastus and Faunia: we shall have ballads made of it within these two months, setting forth, how a young 'squire became a serving man of low degree; and it will be stuck up with Margaret's Ghost and the Spanish Lady, against the walls of every cottage in the country.

Sir Will. But what pleases me best of all, master Hawthorn, is the ingenuity of the girl. May I never do an ill turn, when I was called out of the room, and

the servant said she wanted to speak to me, if I knew what to make on't: but when the little gipsey took me aside, and told me her name, and how matters stood, I was quite astonished, as a body may say; and could not believe it partly; 'till her young friend that she is with here, assured me of the truth on't: Indeed, at last, I began to recollect her face, though I have not set eyes on her before, since she was the height of a full-grown grey-hound.

Haw. Well, Sir William, your son as yet knows nothing of what has happened, nor of your being come hither; and, if you'll follow my counsel, we'll have some sport with him.—He and his mistress were to meet in the garden this evening by appointment, she's gone to dress herself in all her airs; will you let me direct your proceedings in this affair?

Sir Will. With all my heart, master Hawthorn, with all my heart, do what you will with me, say what you please for me; I am so overjoyed, and so happy—And may I never do an ill turn, but I am very glad to see you too; ay, and partly as much pleased at that as any thing else, for we have been merry together before now, when we were some years younger: well, and how has the world gone with you, master Hawthorn, since we saw one another last?

Haw. Why, pretty well, Sir William, I have no reason to complain: every one has a mixture of sour with his sweets: but, in the main, I believe, I have done in a degree as tolerably as my neighbours.

AIR.

The world is a well furnish'd table,
Where guests are promiscuously set;
We all fare as well as were able,
And scramble for what we can get,
My simile holds to a tittle,
Some gorge, while some scarce have a taste;
But if I'm content with a little,
Enough is as good as a feast. 59

SCENE II.

Sir WILLIAM MEADOWS, HAWTHORN, ROSSETTA.

Ros. Sir William, I beg pardon for detaining you, but I have had so much difficulty in adjusting my borrowed plumes.—

Sir Will. May I never do an ill turn but they fit you to a T, and you look very well, so you do: Cocks-bones, how your father will chuckle when he comes to hear this!—Her father, master Hawthorn, is as worthy a man as lives by bread, and has been almost out of his senses for the loss of her—But tell me, hussy, has not this been all a scheme, a piece of conjuration between you and my son? Faith, I am half persuaded it has, it looks so like hocus-pocus as a body may say. 72

Ros. Upon my honour, Sir William, what has happened, has been the mere effect of chance; I came hither unknown to your son, and he unknown to me: I never in the least suspected that Thomas the gardener was other than his appearance spoke him; and least of all, that he was a person with whom I had so close a connection. Mr. Hawthorn can testify the astonishment I was in when he first informed me of it; but I thought it was my duty to come to an immediate explanation with you.

Sir Will. Is not she a neat wench, master Hawthorn? May I never do an ill turn but she is—But you little plaguy devil, how came this love affair between you?

Ros. I have told you the whole truth very ingenuously, Sir: since your son and I have been fellow-servants, as I may call it, in this house, I have had more than reason to suspect he had taken a liking to me; and I will own with equal frankness, had I not looked upon him as a person so much below me, I should have had no objection to receiving his courtship.

Haw. Well said, by the lord Harry, all above board, fair and open.

Ros. Perhaps I may be censured by some for this candid declaration; but I love to speak my sentiments; and I assure you, Sir William, in my opinion, I should prefer a gardener with your son's good qualities, to a knight of the shire without them.

AIR.

'Tis not wealth, it is not birth,
Can value to the soul convey;
Minds possess superior worth,
Which chance nor gives, nor takes away.
Like the sun true Merit shews;
By nature warm, by nature bright;
With inbred flames he nobly glows,
Nor needs the aid of borrow'd light.

Haw. Well, but, Sir, we lose time—is not this about the hour appointed to meet in the garden?

Ros. Pretty near it.

Haw. Oons then, what do we stay for? Come, my old friend, come along, and by the way we will consult how to manage your interview.

Sir Will. Ay, but I must speak a word or two to my man about the horses first.

SCENE III.

ROSSETTA, HODGE.

Ros. Well—What's the business?

Hodge. Madam—Mercy on us, I crave pardon!

Ros. Why, Hodge, don't you know me?

Hodge. Mrs Rossetta!

Ros. Ay.

Hodge. Know you! ecod I don't know whether I do or not: never stir, if I did not think it was some lady belonging to the strange gentlefolks: why, you be'nt dizen'd this way to go to the statute dance presently, be you?

Ros. Have patience and you'll see:—but is there any thing amiss that you came in so abruptly?

Hodge. Amiss! why there's ruination.

Ros. How?—where?

Hodge. Why, with Miss Lucinda: her aunt has catch'd she and the gentleman above stairs, and overheard all their love discourse.

Ros. You don't say so!

Hodge. Ecod, I had like to have pop'd in among them this instant; but, by good luck, I heard Mrs. Deborah's voice, and run down again, as fast as ever my legs could carry me.

Ros. Is your master in the house?

Hodge. What, his worship! no, no, he is gone into the fields to talk with the reapers and people.

Ros. Poor Lucinda, I wish I could go up to her, but I am so engaged with my own affairs——

Hodge. Mistress Rossetta.

Ros. Well.

Hodge. Odds bobs, I must have one smack of your sweet lips.

Ros. Oh stand off, you know I never allow liberties.

Hodge. Nay, but why so coy, there's reason in roasting of eggs: I would not deny you such a thing.

Ros. That's kind: ha, ha, ha—But what will become of Lucinda? Sir William waits for me, I must be gone. Friendship, a moment by your leave; yet as our sufferings have been mutual, so shall our joys; I already lose the remembrance of all former pains and anxieties.

AIR.

The traveller benighted,
And led thro' weary ways,
The lamp of day new lighted,
With joy the dawn surveys.

The rising prospects viewing,
Each look is forward cast;
He smiles, his course pursuing,
Nor thinks of what is past.

SCENE IV.

HODGE, *Mrs.* DEBORAH WOODCOCK, LUCINDA.

Hodge. Hist, stay! don't I hear a noise?

Luc. (within) Well, but dear, dear aunt——

Mrs. Deb. (within) You need not speak to me, for it does not signify.

Hodge. Adwawns, they are coming here! ecod I'll

get out of the way--Murrain take it, this door is bolted now—So, so. 172

Mrs. Deb. Get along, get along; *(Driving in Lucinda before her)* you are a scandal to the name of Woodcock; but I was resolved to find you out, for I have suspected you a great while, though your father, silly man, will have you such a poor innocent.

Luc. What shall I do?

Mrs. Deb. I was determined to discover what you and your pretended music-master were about, and lay in wait on purpose: I believe he thought to escape me, by slipping into the closet when I knocked at the door; but I was even with him, for now I have him under lock and key, and please the fates there he shall remain till your father comes in: I will convince him of his error, whether he will or not.

Luc. You won't be so cruel, I am sure you won't: I thought I had made you my friend by telling you the truth. 189

Mrs. Deb. Telling me the truth, quotha! did I not over-hear your scheme of running away to-night, thro' the partition? did not I find the very bundles pack'd up in the room with you ready for going off? No, brazenface, I found out the truth by my own sagacity, tho' your father says I am a fool, but now we'll be judged who is the greatest.—And you, Mr. Rascal, my brother shall know what an honest servant he has got.

Hodge. Madam!

Mrs. Deb. You were to have been aiding and assisting them in their escape, and have been the go-between, it seems, the letter-carrier!

Hodge. Who, me, madam!

Mrs. Deb. Yes, you, sirrah.

Hodge. Miss Lucinda, did I ever carry a letter for you? I'll make my affidavy before his worship—

Mrs. Deb. Go, go, you are a villain, hold your tongue.

Luc. I own, aunt, I have been very faulty in this affair; I don't pretend to excuse myself; but we are all subject to frailties; consider that, and judge of me by yourself; you were once young, and inexperienced as I am.

AIR.

If ever a fond inclination
Rose in your bosom to rob you of rest,
Reflect with a little compassion,
On the soft pangs, which prevail'd in my breast.
Oh where, where would you fly me?
Can you deny me thus torn and distrest?
Think, when my lover was by me,
Wou'd I, how cou'd I, refuse his request?
Kneeling before you, let me implore you;
Look on me sighing, crying, dying;
Ah! is there no language can move?
If I have been too complying,
Hard was the conflict 'twixt duty and love.

Mrs. Deb. This is mighty pretty romantic stuff! but you learn it out of your play-books and novels. Girls in my time had other employments, we worked a' our needles, and kept ourselves from idle thoughts: before I was your age, I had finished with my own fingers a complete set of chairs, and a fire-screen in tent stitch, four counterpanes in Marseilles quilting; and the creed and the ten commandments, in the hair of our family: it was fram'd and glaz'd, and hung over the parlour chimney-piece, and your poor dear grandfather was prouder of it than of e'er a picture in his house. I never looked into a book, but when I said my prayers, except it was the Complete Housewife, or the great family receipt-book: whereas you are always at your studies! Ah, I never knew a woman come to good, that was fond of reading.

Luc. Well, pray, madam, let me prevail on you to give me the key to let Mr. Eustace out, and I promise, I never will proceed a step farther in this business, without your advice and approbation.

Mrs. Deb. Have not I told you already my resolution?—Where are my clogs and my bonnet? I'll go out to my brother in the fields; I'm a fool, you know, child, now let's see what the wits will think of themselves—Don't hold me— 251

Luc. I'm not going;—I have thought of a way to be even with you, so you may do as you please.

SCENE V.

HODGE.

Well, I thought it would come to this, I'll be shot if I didn't—So here's a fine job—But what can they do to me—They can't send me to jail for carrying a letter, seeing there was no treason in it; and how was I obligated to know my master did not allow of their meetings:—The worst they can do, is to turn me off, and I am sure the place is no such great purchase—indeed, I should be sorry to leave Mrs. Rossetta, seeing as how matters are so near being brought to an end betwixt us; but she and I may keep company all as one; and I find Madge has been speaking with Gaffer Broadwheels, the waggoner, about her carriage up to London: so that I have got rid of she, and I am sure I have reason to be main glad of it, for she led me a wearisome life—But that's the way of them all.

A plague on these wenches, they make such a pother,
Whenonce they have let'n a man have his will;
They're always a whining for something or other,
And cry he's unkind in his carriage.
What tho' he speaks them ne'er so fairly,
Still they keep teazing, teazing on:

You cannot persuade 'em
'Till promise you've made 'em;
And after they've got it,
They tell you—— add rot it,
Their character's blasted, they're ruin'd, undone:
Then to be sure, Sir,
There is but one cure, Sir,
And all their discourse is of marriage.

SCENE VI.

A Greenhouse.

Enter YOUNG MEADOWS.

Y. Mea. I am glad I had the precaution to bring this suit of clothes in my bundle, though I hardly know myself in them again, they appear so strange, and feel so unweildy. However, my gardener's jacket goes on no more.—I wonder this girl does not come [*looking at his watch*]: perhaps she won't come ——Why then I'll go into the village, take a post-chaise and depart without any farther ceremony.

AIR.

How much superior beauty awes,
The coldest bosoms find;
But with resistless force it draws,
To sense and sweetness join'd.

The casket, where, to outward shew,
The workman's art is seen,
Is doubly valu'd, when we know
It holds a gem within.

Hark! she comes.

SCENE VII.

Enter Sir WILLIAM MEADOWS *and* HAWTHORN.

Y. Mea. Confusion! my father! What can this mean?

Sir Will. Tom, are not you a sad boy, Tom, to bring me a hundred and forty miles here—May I never do an ill turn, but you deserve to have your head broke; and I have a good mind, partly—What, sirrah, don't you think it worth your while to speak to me?

Y. Mea. Forgive me, Sir; I own I have been in a fault.

Sir Will. In a fault! to run away from me because I was going to do you good—May I never do an ill turn, Mr. Hawthorn, if I did not pick out as fine a girl for him, partly, as any in England? and the rascal run away from me, and came here and turn'd gardener. And pray what did you propose to yourself, Tom? I know you were always fond of Botany,

as they call it; did you intend to keep the trade going, and advertise fruit-trees and flowering shrubs, to be had at Meadows's nursery?

Haw. No, Sir William, I apprehend the young gentleman designed to lay by the profession; for he has quitted the habit already.

Y. Mea. I am so astonished to see you here, Sir, that I don't know what to say; but I assure you, if you had not come, I should have returned home to you directly. Pray, Sir, how did you find me out?

Sir Will. No matter, Tom, no matter: it was partly by accident, as a body may say; but what does that signify—tell me, boy, how stands your stomach towards matrimony; do you think you could digest a wife now?

Y. Mea. Pray, Sir, don't mention it: I shall always behave myself as a dutiful son ought: I will never marry without your consent, and I hope you won't force me to do it against my own.

Sir Will. Is not this mighty provoking, master Hawthorn? Why, sirrah, did you ever see the lady I designed for you?

Y. Mea. Sir, I don't doubt the lady's merit; but at present, I am not disposed———

Haw. Nay, but young gentleman, fair and softly, you should pay some respect to your father in this matter.

Sir Will. Respect, master Hawthorn! I tell you he shall marry her, or I'll disinherit him! there's once.

Look you Tom, not to make any more words of the matter, I have brought the lady here with me, and I'll see you contracted before we part; or you shall delve and plant cucumbers as long as you live.

Y. Mea. Have you brought the lady here, Sir? I am sorry for it.

Sir Will. Why sorry? what then you won't marry her? we'll see that! Pray, master Hawthorn, conduct the fair one in.——Ay, Sir, you may fret, and dance about, trot at the rate of fifteen miles an hour, if you please, but marry whip me, I'm resolv'd.

SCENE VIII.

Sir WILLIAM MEADOWS, HAWTHORN, YOUNG MEADOWS, ROSETTA.

Haw. Here is the lady, Sir William.

Sir Will. Come in, madam, but turn your face from him—he would not marry you because he had not seen you: but I'll let him know my choice shall be his, and he shall consent to marry you before he sees you, or not an acre of estate—Pray, Sir, walk this way.

Y. Mea. Sir, I cannot help thinking your conduct a little extraordinary; but since you urge me so closely, I must tell you my affections are engaged.

Sir Will. How, Tom, how!

Y. Mea. I was determined, Sir, to have got the better of my inclination, and never have done a thing which I knew would be disagreeable to you.

Sir Will. And pray, Sir, who are your affections engaged to? Let me know that.

Y. Mea. To a person, Sir, whose rank and fortune may be no recommendations to her: but whose charms and accomplishments entitle her to a monarch. I am sorry, Sir, it's impossible for me to comply with your commands, and I hope you will not be offended if I quit your presence.

Sir Will. Not I, not in the least: go about your business.

Y. Mea. Sir, I obey.

Haw. *Now, madam, is the time.*

[*Rossetta advances, Young Meadows turns round and sees her.*]

AIR.

Ros. "*When we see a lover languish,*
"*And his truth and honour prove,*
"*Ah! how sweet to heal his anguish,*
"*And repay him love for love.*"

Sir Will. Well, Tom, will you go away from me now?

Haw. Perhaps, Sir William, your son does not like the lady; and if so, pray don't put a force upon his inclination.

Y. Mea. You need not have taken this method, Sir, to let me see you are acquainted with my folly, whatever my inclinations are.

Sir Will. Well, but Tom, suppose I give my consent to your marrying this young woman?

Y. Mea, Your consent, Sir?

"*Ros.* Come, Sir William, we have carried the jest "far enough; I see your son is in a kind of embar- "rassment, and I don't wonder at it; but this letter, "which I received from him a few days before I left "my father's house, will, I apprehend, expound the "riddle. He cannot be surprised that I ran away "from a gentleman who expressed so much dislike "to me; and what has happened, since chance has "brought us together in masquerade, there is no oc- "casion for me to inform him of."

"*Y. Mea.*" What is all this? Pray don't make a jest of me.

Sir Will. May I never do an ill turn, Tom, if it is not truth; this is my friend's daughter.

Y. Mea. Sir!

Ros. Even so; 'tis very true indeed. In short, you have not been a more whimsical gentleman than I have a gentlewoman; but you see we are designed for one another 'tis plain.

Y. Mea. I know not, Madam, what I either hear or see; a thousand things are crowding on my imagination; while, like one just awakened from a dream, I doubt which is reality, which delusion.

Sir Will. Well then, Tom, come into the air a bit, and recover yourself.

Y. Mea. Nay, dear Sir, have a little patience; do you give her to me?

Sir Will. Give her to you! ay, that I do, and my blessing into the bargain.

Y. Mea. Then, Sir, I am the happiest man in the world; I enquire no farther; here I fix the utmost limits of my hopes and happiness.

AIR.

Y. Mea. *All I wish in her obtaining,*
Fortune can no more impart:
Ros. *Let my eyes, my thoughts explaining,*
Speak the feelings of my heart.
Y. Mea. *Joy and pleasure never ceasing,*
Ros. *Love with length of years increasing.*
Together. *Thus my heart and hand surrender,*
Here my faith and truth I plight;
Constant still, and kind, and tender,
May our flames burn ever bright.

Haw. Give you joy, Sir; and you, fair lady——And, under favour, I'll salute you too, if there's no fear of jealousy.

Y. Mea. And may I believe this?—Pr'ythee tell me, dear Rossetta.

Ros. Step into the house and I'll tell you every thing—I must intreat the good offices of Sir William

and Mr. Hawthorn, immediately; for I am in the utmost uneasiness about my poor friend Lucinda.

Haw. Why, what's the matter?

Ros. I don't know, but I have reason to fear I left her just now in very disagreeable circumstances; however, I hope, if there's any mischief fallen out between her father and her lover——

Haw. The music master! I thought so.

Sir Will. What, is there a lover in the case? May I never do an ill turn, but I am glad, so I am; for we'll make a double wedding; and, by way of celebrating it, take a trip to London, to shew the brides some of the pleasures of the town. And, master Hawthorn, you shall be of the party—Come, children, go before us.

Haw. Thank you, Sir William; I'll go into the house with you, and to church to see the young folks married; but as to London, I beg to be excused.

AIR.

If ever I'm catch'd in those regions of smoke,
That seat of confusion and noise,
May I ne'er know the sweets of a slumber unbroke,
Nor the pleasure the country enjoys,
Nay more, let them take me, to punish my sin,
Where, gaping, the Cockneys *they fleece,*
Clap me up with their monsters, cry, masters walk in,
And shew me for two-pence a piece.

SCENE IX.

Justice WOODCOCK's *Hall.*

Enter Justice WOODCOCK, *Mrs.* DEB. WOODCOCK, LUCINDA, EUSTACE, HODGE.

Mrs. Deb. Why, brother, do you think I can't hear, or see, or make use of my senses? I tell you, I left that fellow locked up in her closet; and, while I have been with you, they have broke open the door, and got him out again.

J. Wood. Well, you hear what they say.

Mrs. Deb. I care not what they say; it's you encourage them in their impudence—Hark'e, hussy, will you face me down that I did not lock the fellow up?

Luc. Really, aunt, I don't know what you mean; when you talk intelligibly, I'll answer you.

Eust. Seriously, madam, this is carrying the jest a little too far.

Mrs. Deb. What then, I did not catch you together in her chamber, nor over-hear your design of going off to-night, nor find the bundles packed up—

Eust. Ha, ha, ha.

Luc. Why aunt, you rave.

Mrs. Deb. Brother, as I am a Christian woman, she confessed the whole affair to me from first to last;

and in this very place was down upon her marrow-bones for half an hour together, to beg I would conceal it from you.

Hodge. Oh Lord! Oh Lord!

Mrs. Deb. What, sirrah, would you brazen me too! Take that. [*boxes him.*]

Hodge. I wish you would keep your hands to yourself; you strike me, because you have been telling his worship stories.

J. Wood. Why, sister, you are tipsy!

Mrs. Deb. I tipsy, brother!—I—that never touch a drop of any thing strong from year's end to year's end; but now and then a little anniseed water, when I have got the cholic.

Luc. Well, aunt, you have been complaining of the stomach-ach all day; and may have taken too powerful a dose of your cordial.

J. Wood. Come, come, I see well enough how it is; this is a lye of her own invention, to make herself appear wise: but, you simpleton, did you not know I must find you out?

SCENE X.

Enter Sir WILLIAM MEADOWS, HAWTHORN, ROSETTA, YOUNG MEADOWS.

Y. Mea. Bless me, Sir! look who is yonder.

Sir. Will. Cocksbones, Jack, honest Jack, are you there?

Eust. Plague on't, this rencounter is unlucky—— Sir William, your servant.

Sir Will. Your servant again, and again, heartily your servant; may I never do an ill turn, but I am glad to meet you.

J. Wood. Pray, Sir William, are you acquainted with this person?

Sir. Will. What, with Jack Eustace! why he's my kinsman: his mother and I was cousin-germans once removed, and Jack's a very worthy young fellow, may I never do an ill turn if I tell a word of a lye.

J. Wood. Well, but Sir William, let me tell you, you know nothing of the matter; this man is a musick-master; a thrummer of wire, and a scraper of cat-gut, and teaches my daughter to sing.

Sir. Will. What Jack Eustace a musick-master! no, no, I know him better.

Eust. 'Sdeath, why should I attempt to carry on this absurd farce any longer;—What that gentleman tells you is very true, Sir; I am no musick-master indeed.

J. Wood. You are not, you own it then?

Eust. Nay, more, Sir, I am, as this lady has represented me [*Pointing to Mrs. Deborah*], your daughter's lover; whom, with her own consent, I did intend to have carried off this night; but now that Sir William Meadows is here, to tell you who, and what I am, I throw myself upon your generosity, from which I ex-

peĉt greater advantages than I could reap from any imposition on your unsuspicious nature.

Mrs. Deb. Well, brother, what have you to say for yourself now? You have made a precious day's work of it! Had my advice been taken! Oh I am ashamed of you, but you are a weak man, and it can't be help'd; however, you should let wiser heads direct you.

Luc. Dear papa, pardon me.

Sir Will. Ay, do, Sir, forgive her; my cousin Jack will make her a good husband, I'll answer for it.

Ros. Stand out of the way, and let me speak two or three words to his worship.—Come, my dear Sir, tho' you refuse all the world, I am sure you can deny me nothing: love is a venial fault—You know what I mean.——Be reconciled to your daughter, I conjure you, by the memory of our past affections——What, not a word!

AIR.

Go, naughty man, I can't abide you;
Are then your vows so soon forgot?
Ah! now I see if I had try'd you,
What would have been my hopeful lot.

But here I charge you—Make them happy;
Bless the fond pair, and crown their bliss:
Come be a dear good natur'd poppy,
And I'll reward you with a kiss.

Mrs. Deb. Come, turn out of the house, and be thankful my brother does not hang you, for he could do it, he's a justice of peace;—turn out of the house, I say:——

J. Wood. Who gave you authority to turn him out of the house—he shall stay where he is.

Mrs. Deb. He shan't marry my neice.

J. Wood. Shan't he? but I'll shew you the difference now, I say, he shall marry her, and what will you do about it?

Mrs. Deb. And you will give him your estate too, will you?

J. Wood. Yes, I will.

Mrs. Deb. Why I'm sure he's a vagabond.

J. Wood. I like him the better, I would have him a vagabond.

Mrs. Deb. Brother, brother!

Haw. Come, come, Madam, all's very well, and I see my neighbour is what I always thought him, a man of sense and prudence.

Sir Will. May I never do an ill turn, but I say so too.

J. Wood. Here, young fellow, take my daughter, and bless you both together; but hark you, no money till I die; observe that.

Eust. Sir, in giving me your daughter, you bestow upon me more than the whole world would be without her.

Ros. Dear Lucinda, if words could convey the transports of my heart upon this occasion——

Luc. Words are the tools of hypocrites, the pretenders to friendship; only let us resolve to preserve our esteem for each other.

Y. Mea. Dear Jack, I little thought we should ever meet in such odd circumstances—but here has been the strangest business between this lady and me——

Hodge. What then, Mrs. Rossetta, are you turned false-hearted after all; will you marry Thomas the gardener; and did I forsake Madge for this?

Ros. Oh lord! Hodge, I beg your pardon; I protest I forgot; but I must reconcile you and Madge, I think, and give you a wedding-dinner to make you amends.

Hodge. N—ah.

Haw. Adds me, Sir, here are some of your neighbours come to visit you, and I suppose to make up the company of your statute-ball; yonder's musick too I see; shall we enjoy ourselves? If so, give me your hand.

J. Wood. Why, here's my hand, and we will enjoy ourselves; Heaven bless you both, children, I say—Sister Deborah, you are a fool.

Mrs. Deb. You are a fool, brother; and mark my words——But I'll give myself no more trouble about you.

Haw. Fiddlers strike up.

AIR

Hence with cares, complaints, and frowning,
Welcome jollity and joy;
Ev'ry grief in pleasure drowning,
Mirth this happy night employ:
Let's to friendship do our duty,
Laugh and sing some good old strain;
Drink a health to love and beauty——
May they long in triumph reign.

A

TABLE OF THE SONGS,

With the NAMES *of the several* COMPOSERS.

N. B. Those marked thus * were composed on purpose for this Opera.

A New Overture by Mr. Abel.

ACT I.

HOPE, thou nurse of young desire,	Mr. Weldon
Whence can you inherit	Abos
My heart's my own, my will is free	Arne
When once love's subtile poison gains	Arne
*Oh had I been by Fate decreed	Howard
Gentle youth, ah tell me why	Arne
*Still in hopes to get the better	Arne
There was a jolly miller once	
Let gay ones and great	Baildon
The honest heart whose thoughts are free	Festing
Well, we may no more	*Larry Gorgan*
Cupid, god of soft persuasion	Giardini

How happy were my days till now — Arne
A medley

ACT II.

We women like weak Indians trade — Paradies
Think my fairest, how delay — Arne
* Believe me, dear aunt — Arne
When I follow'd a lass that was froward and shy
Let rakes and libertines resign'd — Handel
How blest the maid whose bosom — Gallupi
In vain I every art assay — Arne
Begone, I agree — Arne
Oh how shall I in language weak — Cary
Young I am, and sore afraid — Gallupi
Oons, neighbour, ne'er blush — Arne
My Dolly was the fairest thing — Handel
Was ever poor fellow — Agus
Cease, gay seducers, pride to take — Arne
Since Hodge proves ungrateful — Arne
In love should there meet a fond pair — Bernard
* Well come let us hear

ACT III.

The world is a well furnish'd table — Arne
It is not wealth, it is not birth — Geminiani
* The traveller benighted — Arne
If ever a fond inclination — Geminiani

Plague o'these wenches, &c.	*St. Patrick's Day*
*How much superior beauty awes	Howard
[illegible]hen we see a lover languish	Arne
[illegible]'d wish in her obtaining	Arne
If [illegible] I'm catch'd in those regions	Boyce
*Go, naughty man, I can't abide you	Arne
Hence with cares	Boyce

D. Wilde ad viv. pinx.t

Mrs. JORDAN as PEGGY.

Why do you marry me then? 'tis the same thing

London. Printed for J. Bell, British Library, Strand 15th July 1791.

London Printed for J. Bell, British Library, Strand, 1st July 1790.

THE

COUNTRY GIRL.

A

COMEDY.

ALTERED FROM WYCHERLY

BY DAVID GARRICK, ESQ.

ADAPTED FOR

THEATRICAL REPRESENTATION,

AS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE-ROYAL, DRURY-LANE.

REGULATED FROM THE PROMPT-BOOKS,

By Permission of the Managers.

"The Lines distinguished by inverted Commas are omitted in the Representation."

LONDON:

For the Proprietors, under the Direction of

JOHN BELL, British Library, STRAND,

Bookseller to His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales.

M DCC XCI.

WILLIAM WYCHERLY.

THIS Comic Poet, was born about the year 1640.—Like several of the Muse's ornaments, he was intended for the profession of the law—but the gay and seducing amusements of the town allured him from the severities of that study, and finding the production of Comedy the shortest step into favour and fashion, he commenced a Writer for the Stage.

The reign of the Second Charles was favourable thus far to literature, that the Court patronized what was believed the brightest talent among the people.—WYCHERLY came in for a full share of this distinction; and what has seldom happened from crowned heads, CHARLES in person condescended to visit the poet in a severe indisposition, under which he was reduced to the last extremity. His Majesty laid his commands upon him to go into the South of France, and liberally ordered him 500*l.* to defray his expences.—At his return, the Monarch told him that his opinion of him was so high, that his Son should be consigned to his tuition, and that as his governor he should receive an appointment of 1500*l.* per ann.

At Tunbridge, however, chance threw him into the way of the Countess of DROGHEDA, and shortly after he married her.—This contumacy to the disposition of the king, and the added ingratitude of making not the smallest communication to his Majesty of his intention, lost him deservedly the royal favour.—The Countess embittered his life by a jealousy, which never suffered him a minute from her sight.—She indeed relieved him shortly from this torment by her death—but his title to her fortune was disputed. He became embarrassed and indigent, and was thrown into prison until JAMES the Second, luckily seeing the Plain Dealer, gave orders that his debts should be discharged, and himself allowed a pension of 200*l.* per annum. WYCHERLY struggled with the dishonour of disclosing the whole of his debts, and thus rendered the king's bounty in some measure ineffectual.—His father's death did not much relieve him—he found his inheritance here too involved.—Eleven days before he died he married again, for the express purpose of paying his creditors with his wife's fortune of 1500*l.*—He was summoned finally from all his cares on the 1st of January, 1715.

THE

COUNTRY GIRL.

THIS Comedy is an alteration from the Country Wife of WYCHERLY. The usual taint of the time in which he wrote had so infected the whole mass, that Mr. GARRICK found himself reduced to the necessity of lopping off a limb (HORNER) to save the whole from putrefaction.

As it is here given, there is a considerable degree of sprightly dialogue, keen remark, and facility of invention.—If we except CONGREVE, WYCHERLY is equal to any of his followers; with them he has one common defect, that they are not sufficiently scrupulous as to tendency—and the spoiler of domestic peace unpunished riots in the perversion of legitimate principles, and the injury offered to the wise and the worthy.—A foible is without distinction punished as a vice, and the profligacy of the pleasing debauchee rewarded as a virtue.

It would be unpardonable if we were to close this article without observing, that the excellence of Mrs. JORDAN in the Country Girl is so powerful—every girlish trick so minutely and naturally delineated, that we pronounce the performance to be HER *chef d'œuvre*, and assuredly the boast of modern acting.

Dramatis Personae.

DRURY-LANE.

Men.

Moody,	Mr. King.
Harcourt,	Mr. Palmer.
Sparkish,	Mr. Dodd.
Belville,	Mr. Whitfield.
Footman,	Mr. Spencer.
Countryman,	Mr. Jones.
Servant,	Mr. Alfred.

Women.

Miss Peggy,	Mrs. Jordan.
Alithea,	Mrs. Ward.
Lucy,	Mrs. Williames.

Scene, *London.*

THE

COUNTRY GIRL.

ACT I. SCENE I.

HARCOURT's *lodgings.* HARCOURT *and* BELVILLE *discovered sitting.*

Harcourt.

HA, ha, ha! and so you are in love, nephew, not reasonably and gallantly, as a young gentleman ought, but sighingly, miserably so—not content to be ankle-deep, you have sous'd over head and ears—ha, Dick?

Belv. I am pretty much in that condition, indeed, uncle. [*Sighs.*

Harc. Nay, never blush at it—when I was of your age I was asham'd too—but three years at college, and half a one at Paris, methinks should have cured you of that unfashionable weakness—modesty.

Belv. Could I have releas'd myself from that, I had, perhaps, been at this instant happy in the possession of what I must despair now ever to obtain—Heigho!

Harc. Ha, ha, ha! very foolish indeed.

Belv. Don't laugh at me, uncle; I am foolish, I know I but, like other fools, I deserve to be pitied.

Harc. Pr'ythee don't talk of pity; how can I help you;——for this country girl of yours is certainly married.

Belv. No, no—I won't believe it; she is not married, nor she shan't, if I can help it.

Harc. Well said, modesty—with such a spirit you can help yourself, Dick, without my assistance.

Belv. But you must encourage, and advise me too, or I shall never make any thing of it.

Harc. Provided the girl is not married; for I never, never encourage young men to covet their neighbours wives.

Belv. My heart assures me, that she is not married.

Harc. O to be sure, your heart is much to be relied upon—but to convince you that I have a fellow-feeling of your distress, and that I am as nearly allied to you in misfortunes as in relationship—you must know———

Belv. What, uncle? you alarm me!

Harc. That I am in love too.

Belv. Indeed!

Harc. Miserably in love.

Belv. That's charming.

Harc. And my mistress is just going to be married to another.

Belv. Better and better.

Harc. I knew my fellow-sufferings would please you; but now prepare for the wonderful wonder-of-wonders!

Belv. Well!———

Harc. My mistress is in the same house with yours.

Belv. What, are you in love with Peggy too?

[*Rising from his chair.*

Harc. Well said, jealousy.—No, no, set your heart at rest.—Your Peggy is too young, and too simple for me.—I must have one a little more knowing, a little better bred, just old enough to see the difference between me and a coxcomb, spirit enough to break from a brother's engagements, and chuse for herself.

Belv. You don't mean Alithea, who is to be married to Mr. Sparkish?

Harc. Can't I be in love with a lady that is going to be married to another, as well as you, sir?

Belv. But Sparkish is your friend?

Harc. Pr'ythee don't call him my friend; he can be nobody's friend, not even his own—He would thrust himself into my acquaintance, would introduce me to his mistress, tho' I have told him again and again that I was in love with her, which, instead of ridding me of him, has made him only ten times more troublesome—and me really in love—He should suffer for his self-sufficiency.

Belv. 'Tis a conceited puppy!—And what success with the lady?

Harc. No great hopes—and yet, if I could defer the marriage a few days, I should not despair;—her

honour, I am confident, is her only attachment to my rival—she can't like Sparkish, and if I can work upon his credulity, a credulity which even popery would be asham'd of, I may yet have the chance of throwing sixes upon the dice to save me.

Belv. Nothing can save *me*.

Harc. No, not if you whine and sigh, when you should be exerting every thing that is man about you. I have sent Sparkish, who is admitted at all hours in the house, to know how the land lies for you, and if she is not married already.

Belv. How cruel you are—you raise me up with one hand, and then knock me down with the other.

Harc. Well, well, she shan't be married. [*Knocking at the door.*] This is Sparkish, I suppose: don't drop the least hint of your passion to him; if you do, you may as well advertise it in the public papers.

Belv. I'll be careful.

Enter servant.

Serv. An odd sort of a person, from the country I believe, who calls himself Moody, wants to see you, sir; but as I did not know him, I said you were not at home, but would return directly; *and so will I too*, said he, very short and surly! and away he went, mumbling to himself.

Harc. Very well, Will—I'll see him when he comes. [*Exit servant.*] Moody call to see me!—He has something more in his head than making me a visit—'tis to complain of you, I suppose.

Belv. How can he know me?

Harc. We must suppose the worst, and be prepared for him—tell me all you know of this ward of his, this Peggy—Peggy what's her name?

Belv. Thrift, Thrift, uncle.

Harc. Ay, ay, sir Thomas Thrift's daughter, of Hampshire, and left very young under the guardianship of my old acquaintance and companion, Jack Moody.

Belv. Your companion! he's old enough to be your father.

Harc. Thank you, nephew; he has greatly the advantage of me in years, as well as wisdom. When I first launched from the university, into this ocean of London, he was the greatest rake in it; I knew him well, for near two years, but all of a sudden he took a freak (a very prudent one) of retiring wholly into the country.

Belv. There he gain'd such an ascendency over the odd disposition of his neighbour, sir Thomas, that he left him sole guardian to his daughter, who forfeits half her fortune, if she does not marry with his consent—there's the devil, uncle.

Harc. And are you so young, so foolish, and so much in love, that you would take her with half her value? ha, nephew?

Belv. I'll take her with any thing—with nothing.

Harc. What! such an unaccomplish'd, awkward, silly creature; he has scarce taught her to write; she has seen nobody to converse with, but the country

people about 'em; so she can do nothing but dangle her arms, look gawky, turn her toes in, and talk broad Hampshire.

Belv. Don't abuse her sweet simplicity—had you but heard her talk, as I have done, from the garden-wall in the country, by moon-light———

Harc. Romeo and Juliet, I protest, ha, ha, ha! *Arise fair sun, and kill the envious*——ha, ha, ha! How often have you seen this fair Capulet?

Belv. I saw her three times in the country, and spoke to her twice; I have leapt an orchard-wall, like Romeo, to come at her, play'd the balcony-scene, from an old summer-house in the garden; and if I lose her, I will find out an apothecary, and play the tomb-scene too.

Harc. Well said, Dick!—this spirit must produce something—but has the old dragon ever caught you sighing at her?

Belv. Never in the country; he saw me yesterday kissing my hand to her, from the new tavern-window that looks upon the back of his house, and immediately drove her from it, and fasten'd up the window-shutters. [Sparkish *without.*

Spark. Very well, Will, I'll go up to 'em.

Harc. I hear Sparkish coming up—take care of what I told you—not a word of Peggy;—hear his intelligence, and make use of it, without seeming to mind it.

Belv. Mum, mum, uncle.

Enter SPARKISH.

Spark. O, my dear Harcourt, I shall die with laughing—I have such news for thee—ha, ha, ha!—What, your nephew too, and a little dumpish, or so—you have been giving him a lecture upon œconomy. I suppose—you, who never had any, can best describe the evils that arise from the want of it.—I never mind my own affairs, not I—"The gods take care of Cato."—I hear, Mr. Belville, you have got a pretty snug house, with a bow-window that looks into the park, and a back-door that goes out into it.—Very convenient, and well-imagined—no young, handsome fellow should be without one—you may be always ready there, like a spider in his web, to seize upon stray'd women of quality.

Harc. As you used to do—you vain fellow you; pr'ythee don't teach my nephew your abandoned tricks—he is a modest young man, and you must not spoil him.—

Spark. May be so;—but his modesty has done some mischief at our house—my surly, jealous brother-in-law saw that modest young gentleman casting a wishful eye at his forbidden fruit, from the new tavern-window.

Belv. You mistake the person, Mr. Sparkish—I don't know what young lady you mean.

Harc. Explain yourself, Sparkish, you must mistake—Dick has never seen the girl.

Spark. I don't say he has; I only tell you what

Moody says. Besides, he went to the tavern himself, and enquired of the waiter, who dined in the back-room, No. 4, and they told him it was Mr. Belville, your nephew; that's all I know of the matter, or desire to know of it, faith.

Harc. He kiss'd his hand, indeed, to your lady, Alithea, and is more in love with her than you are and very near as much as I am; so look about you, such a youth may be dangerous.

Spark. The more danger the more honour: I defy you both; win her and wear her if you can—*Dolus an virtus* in love as well as in war—tho' you must be expeditious, faith; for I believe, if I don't change my mind, I shall marry her to-morrow, or the day after. Have you no honest clergyman, Harcourt, no fellow-collegian to recommend to me to do the business?

Harc. Nothing ever, sure, was so lucky. [*Aside.*] Why, faith, I have, Sparkish; my brother, a twin-brother, Ned Harcourt, will be in town to-day, and proud to attend your commands. I am a very generous rival, you see, to lend you my brother to marry the woman I love!

Spark. And so am I too, to let your brother come so near us—but Ned shall be the man; poor Alithea grows impatient—I can't put off the evil day any longer—I fancy the brute, her brother, has a mind to marry his country idiot at the same time.

Belv. How, country idiot, sir!

Harc. Taisez vous bête. [*Aside to* Belv.] I thought he had been married already.

Spark. No, no, he's not married, that's the joke of it.

Belv. No, no, he is not married.

Harc. Hold your tongue— [*Elbowing* Belville.

Spark. Not he—I have the finest story to tell you—by the bye, he intends calling upon you, for he ask'd me where you lived, to complain of *modesty* there.—He pick'd up an old raking acquaintance of his, as we came along together—Will. Frankly, who saw him with his girl, sculking and muffled up, at the play last night: he plagu'd him much about matrimony, and his being ashamed to shew himself; swore he was in love with his wife, and intended to cuckold him. Do you? cry'd Moody, folding his arms, and scowling with his eyes thus—*You must have more wit than you used to have.—Besides, if you have as much as you think you have, I shall be out of your reach, and this profligate metropolis, in less than a week.* Moody would fain have got rid of him, but the other held him by the sleeve, so I left 'em; rejoiced most luxuriously to see the poor devil tormented.

Belv. I thought you said, just now, that he was *not* married: is not that a contradiction, sir?

[Harcourt *still makes signs to* Belville.

Spark. Why, it is a kind of one—but considering your modesty, and your ignorance of the young lady, you are pretty tolerably inquisitive, methinks, ha, Harcourt! ha, ha, ha!

Harc. Pooh, pooh! don't talk to that boy, tell me all you know.

Spark. You must know, my booby of a brother-in-law hath brought up this ward of his (a good fortune let me tell you) as he coops up and fattens his chickens, for his own eating: he is plaguy jealous of her, and was very sorry that he could not marry her in the country, without coming up to town; which he could not do, on account of some writings or other; so what does my gentleman? he persuades the poor silly girl, by breaking a six-pence, or some nonsence or another, that they are to all intents married in Heaven; but that the laws require the signing of articles, and the church-service to complete their union—so he has made her call him husband, and Bud, which she constantly does, and he calls her wife, and gives out she is married, that she may not look after younger fellows, nor younger fellows after her, egad; ha, ha, ha! and all won't do.

Belv. Thank you, sir.——What heavenly news, uncle. [*Aside.*

Harc. What an idiot you are, nephew! And so then you make but one trouble of it; and are both to be tack'd together the same day?

Spark. No, no, he can't be married this week; he damns the lawyers for keeping him in town;——besides, I am out of favour; and he is continually snarling at me, and abusing me, for not being jealous. [*Knocking at the door.*] There he is—I must not be seen with you, for he'll suspect something; I'll go with your nephew to his house, and we'll wait for you, and make a visit to my wife that is to be, and,

perhaps, we shall shew young modesty here a sight of Peggy too.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Sir, here's the strange, odd sort of a gentleman come again, and I have shewn him into the fore-parlour.

Spark. That must be Moody! Well said, Will; an odd sort of a strange gentleman indeed; we'll step into the next room 'till he comes into this, and then you may have him all to yourself—much good may do you. [Sparkish *going, returns.*] Remember that he is married, or he'll suspect me of betraying him.

[*Exeunt* Sparkish *and* Belville.

Harc. Shew him up, Will. [*Exit Serv.*] Now must I prepare myself to see a very strange, tho' a very natural metamorphosis—a once high-spirited, handsome, well-dress'd, raking prodigal of the town, sunk into a surly, suspicious, œconomical, country sloven——

Enter MOODY.

Moody. Mr. Harcourt, your humble servant——have you forgot me?

Harc. What, my old friend Jack Moody! By thy long absence from the town, the grumness of thy countenance, and the slovenliness of thy habit, I should give thee joy—you are certainly married.

Moody. My long stay in the country will excuse my dress, and I have a suit at law that brings me up to

town, and puts me out of humour—besides, I must give Sparkish ten thousand pounds to-morrow to take my sister off my hands.

Harc. Your sister is very much obliged to you—— being so much older than her, you have taken upon you the authority of a father, and have engaged her to a coxcomb.

Moody. I have, and to oblige her——nothing but coxcombs or debauchees are the favourites now-a-days, and a coxcomb is rather the more innocent animal of the two.

Harc. She has sense and taste, and can't like him; so you must answer for the consequences.

Moody. When she is out of my hands, her husband must look to consequences. He's a fashionable fool, and will cut his horns kindly.

Harc. And what is to secure your worship from consequences?—I did not expect marriage from such a rake——one that knew the town so well: fye, fye, Jack.

Moody. I'll tell you my security—I have married no London wife.

Harc. That's all one—that grave circumspection in marrying a country wife, is like refusing a deceitful, pamper'd, Smithfield jade, to go and be cheated by a friend in the country.

Moody. I wish the devil had both him and his simile. [*Aside.*

Harc. Well, never grumble about it, what's done can't be undone; is your wife handsome, and young?

Moody. She has little beauty but her youth, nothing to brag of but her health, and no attraction but her modesty——wholesome, homely, and housewifely—that's all.

Harc. You talk as like a grazier as you look, Jack—why did you not bring her to town before, to be taught something?

Moody. Which something I might repent as long as I live——

Harc. But, pr'ythee, why would'st thou marry her, if she be ugly, ill-bred, and silly? She must be rich then.

Moody. As rich as if she had the wealth of the Mogul—she'll not ruin her husband, like a London baggage, with a million of vices she never heard of—then, because she's ugly, she's the likelier to be my own; and being ill-bred, she'll hate conversation; and since silly and innocent, will not know the difference between me and you; that is, between a man of thirty, and one of forty.

Harc. Fifty, to my knowledge—[Moody *turns off, and grumbles.*]—But see how you and I differ, Jack—wit to me is more necessary than beauty: I think no young woman ugly that has it; and no handsome woman agreeable without it.

Moody. 'Tis my maxim—He's a fool that marries; but he's a greater that does not marry a fool.——I know the town, Mr. Harcourt; and my wife shall be virtuous in spite of you, or your nephew.

Harc. My nephew!—poor sheepish lad—he runs

away from every woman he sees—he saw your sister Alithea at the opera, and was much smitten with her—He always toasts her—and hates the very name of Sparkish. I'll bring him to your house—and you shall see what a formidable Tarquin he is.

Moody. I have no curiosity, so give yourself no trouble. You have heard of a wolf in sheep's cloathing, and I have seen your innocent nephew kissing his hands at my windows.

Harc. At your sister, I suppose; not at her unless he was tipsy. How can you, Jack, be so outrageously suspicious? Sparkish has promised to introduce him to his mistress.

Moody. Sparkish is a fool, and may be, what I'll take care not to be. I confess my visit to you, Mr. Harcourt, was partly for old acquaintance sake, but chiefly to desire your nephew to confine his gallantries to the tavern, and not send 'em in looks, signs, or tokens, on the other side of the way. I keep no brothel—so pray tell your nephew. [*Going.*

Harc. Nay, pr'ythee, Jack, leave me in better humour.—Well, I'll tell him, ha, ha, ha! poor Dick, how he'll stare. This will give him a reputation, and the girls won't laugh at him any longer. Shall we dine together at the tavern, and send for my nephew to chide him for his gallantry? Ha, ha, ha! we shall have fine sport.

Moody. I am not to be laugh'd out of my senses, Mr. Harcourt; I was once a modest, meek, young gentleman myself, and I never have been half so mis-

chievous before or since, as I was in that state of innocence. And so, old friend, make no ceremony with me—I have much business, and you have much pleasure, and therefore, as I hate forms, I will excuse your returning my visit; or sending your nephew to satisfy me of his modesty—and so your servant. [*Exit.*

Hasc. Ha, ha, ha! poor Jack! what a life of suspicion does he lead! I pity the poor fellow, tho' he ought, and will suffer, for his folly.——Folly!—'tis treason, murder, sacrilege! When persons of a certain age will indulge their false, ungenerous appetites, at the expence of a young creature's happiness, dame Nature will revenge herself upon them, for thwarting her most heavenly will and pleasure. [*Exit.*

ACT II. SCENE I.

A chamber in MOODY'S *house. Enter Miss* PEGGY *and* ALITHEA.

Peggy.

PRAY, sister, where are the best fields and woods to walk in, in London?

Alith. A pretty question! Why, sister, Vauxhall, Ranelagh, and St. James's Park, are the most frequented.

Peg. Pray, sister, tell me why my Bud looks so grum here in town, and keeps me up close, and will

not let me go a walking, nor let me wear my best gown yesterday.

Alith. O, he's jealous, sister.

Peg. Jealous! what's that?

Alith. He's afraid you should love another man.

Peg. How should he be afraid of my loving another man, when he will not let me see any but himself?

Alith. Did he not carry you yesterday to a play?

Peg. Ay; but we sat amongst ugly people: he would not let me come near the gentry, who sat under us, so that I could not see 'em. He told me none but naughty women sat there—but I would have ventured for all that.

Alith. But how did you like the play?

Peg. Indeed I was weary of the play; but I liked hugeously the actors; they are the goodliest, properest men, sister.

Alith. O, but you must not like the actors, sister.

Peg. Ay, how should I help it sister! Pray, sister, when my guardian comes in, will you ask leave for me to go a walking?

Alith. A walking, ha, ha, ha! Lord, a country gentlewoman's pleasure is the drudgery of a footpost; and she requires as much airing as her husband's horses. [*Aside.*] But here comes my brother, I'll ask him, tho' I'm sure he'll not grant it.

Enter MOODY.

Peg. O my dear, dear Bud, welcome home; why dost thou look so fropish? Who has nanger'd thee?

Moody. You're a fool. [Peggy *goes aside, and cries.*

Alith. Faith, and so she is, for crying for no fault, poor tender creature!

Moody. What, you would have her as impudent as yourself, as arrant a gilflirt, a gadder, a magpie, and, to say all, a mere notorious town woman!

Alith. Brother, you are my only censurer; and the honour of your family will sooner suffer in your wife that is to be, than in me, tho' I take the innocent liberty of the town!

Moody. Hark you, mistress, do not talk so before my wife: the innocent liberty of the town!

Alith. Pray, what ill people frequent my lodgings? I keep no company with any woman of scandalous reputation.

Moody. No, you keep the men of scandalous reputation company.

Alith. Would you not have me civil, answer 'em at public places, walk with 'em when they join me in the Park, Ranelagh, or Vauxhall?

Moody. Hold, hold; do not teach my wife where the men are to be found: I believe she's the worse for your town documents already. I bid you keep her in ignorance, as I do.

Peg. Indeed, be not angry with her, Bud, she will tell me nothing of the town, tho' I ask her a thousand times a day.

Moody. Then you are very inquisitive to know, I find?

Peg. Not I indeed, dear; I hate London: our play-house in the country is worth a thousand of 't; would I were there again!

Moody. So you shall, I warrant. But were you not talking of plays and players when I came in? you are her encourager in such discourses.

Peg. No, indeed, dear; she chid me just now for liking the player-men.

Moody. Nay, if she is so innocent as to own to me her liking them, there is no hurt in't. [*Aside.*] Come, my poor rogue, but thou likest none better than me?

Peg. Yes, indeed, but I do; the player-men are finer folks.

Moody. But you love none better than me?

Peg. You are my own dear Bud, and I know you; I hate strangers.

Moody. Ay, my dear, you must love me only; and not be like the naughty town-women, who only hate their husbands, and love every man else; love plays, visits, fine coaches, fine clothes, fiddles, balls, treats, and so lead a wicked town-life.

Peg. Nay, if to enjoy all these things be a town-life, London is not so bad a place, dear.

Moody. How! if you love me, you must hate London.

Peg. But, Bud, do the town-women love the player-men too?

Moody. Ay, I warrant you.

Peg. Ay, I warrant you.

Moody. Why, you do not, I hope?

Peg. No, no, Bud; but why have we no player-men in the country?

Moody. Ha! Mrs. Minx, ask me no more to go to a play.

Peg. Nay, why, love? I did not care for going: but when you forbid me, you make me as 'twere desire it.

Alith. So 'twill be in other things, I warrant. [*Aside.*

Peg. Pray let me go to a play, dear?

Moody. Hold your peace, I won't.

Peg. Why, love?

Moody. Why, I'll tell you.

Alith. Nay, if he tell her, she'll give him more cause to forbid her that place. [*Aside.*

Peg. Pray, why, dear?

Moody. First, you like the actors; and the gallants may like you.

Peg. What, a homely country girl? No, Bud, nobody will like me.

Moody. I tell you yes, they may.

Peg. No, no, you jest—I won't believe you: I will go.

Moody. I tell you then, that one of the most raking fellows in town, who saw you there, told me he was in love with you.

Peg. Indeed! who, who, pray, who was't?

Moody. I've gone too far, and slipt before I was aware. How overjoy'd she is! [*Aside*

Peg. Was it any Hampshire gallant, any of our neighbours?——Promise you I am beholden to him.

Moody. I promise you, you lie; for he would but ruin you, as he has done hundreds.

Peg. Ay, but if he loves me, why should he ruin me? answer me to that. Methinks he should not; I would do him no harm.

Alith. Ha, ha, ha!

Moody. 'Tis very well; but I'll keep him from doing you any harm, or me either. But here comes company, get you in, get you in.

Peg. But pray, husband, is he a pretty gentleman that loves me?

Moody. In, baggage, in.

[*Thrusts her in, and shuts the door.*

Enter SPARKISH, HARCOURT, *and* BELVILLE.

Moody. What, all the libertines of the town brought to my lodging, by this easy coxcomb! 'Sdeath, I'll not suffer it.

Spark. Here, Belville, do you approve my choice? Dear little rogue, I told you, I'd bring you acquainted with all my friends, the wits.

Moody. Ay, they shall know her as well as you yourself will, I warrant you.

Spark. This is one of those, my pretty rogue, that are to dance at your wedding to-morrow. And one you must make welcome, for he's modest. [Belville *salutes* Alithea.] Harcourt makes himself welcome,

and has not the same foible, though of the same family.

Harc. You are too obliging, Sparkish.

Moody. And so he is indeed——the fop's horns will as naturally sprout upon his brows, as mushrooms upon dunghills.

Harc. This, Mr. Moody, is my nephew you mentioned to me; I would bring him with me, for a sight of him will be sufficient, without poppy or mandragora, to restore you to your rest.

Belv. I am sorry, sir, that any mistake or imprudence of mine should have given you any uneasiness; it was not so intended, I assure you, sir.

Moody. It may be so, sir, but not the less criminal for that—My wife, sir, must not be smirk'd and nodded at from tavern windows; I am a good shot, young gentleman, and don't suffer magpies to come near my cherries.

Belv. Was it your wife, sir?

Moody. What's that to you, sir—suppose it was my grandmother?

Belv. I would not dare to offend her—permit me to say a word in private to you.

[*Exeunt* Moody *and* Belville.

Spark. Now old surly is gone, tell me, Harcourt, if thou likest her as well as ever——My dear, don't look down, I should hate to have a wife of mine out of countenance at any thing.

Alith. For shame, Mr. Sparkish.

Spark. Tell me, I say, Harcourt, how dost like

her? thou hast star'd upon her enough to resolve me.

Harc. So infinitely well, that I could wish I had a mistress too, that might differ from her in nothing but her love and engagement to you.

Alith. Sir, Mr. Sparkish has often told me, that his acquaintance were all wits and railers, and now I find it.

Spark. No, by the universe, madam, he does not rally now; you may believe him; I do assure you he is the honestest, worthiest, true-hearted gentleman; a man of such perfect honour, he would say nothing to a lady he does not mean.

Harc. Sir, you are so beyond expectation obliging, that———

Spark. Nay, egad, I am sure you do admire her extremely, I see it in your eyes——He does admire you, madam, he has told me so a thousand and a thousand times—Have you not, Harcourt? You do admire her, by the world you do—don't you?

Harc. Yes, above the world, or the most glorious part of it, her whole sex; and 'till now, I never thought I should have envied you or any man about to marry: but you have the best excuse to marry I ever knew.

Alith. Nay, now, sir, I am satisfied you are of the society of the wits and railers, since you cannot spare your friend, even when he is most civil to you; but the surest sign is, you are an enemy to marriage, the common butt of every railer.

Harc. Truly, madam, I was never an enemy to marriage till now, because marriage was never an enemy to me before.

Alith. But why, sir, is marriage an enemy to you now? because it robs you of your friend here? for you look upon a friend married, as one gone into a monastery, that is dead to the world.

Harc. 'Tis indeed, because you marry him: I see, madam, you can guess my meaning: I do confess heartily and openly, I wish it were in my power to break the match; by Heavens I would.

Spark. Poor Frank!

Alith. Would you be so unkind to me?

Harc. No, no, 'tis not because I would be unkind to you.

Spark. Poor Frank; no, egad, 'tis only his kindness to me.

Alith. Great kindness to you indeed!—Insensible! Let a man make love to his mistress to his face.

[*Aside.*

Spark. Come, dear Frank, for all my wife there, that shall be, thou shalt enjoy me sometimes, dear rogue: by my honour, we men of wit condole for our diseased brother in marriage, as much as for one dead in earnest: I think that was prettily said of me, ha, Harcourt?——But come, Frank, be not melancholy for me.

Harc. No, I assure you, I am not melancholy for you.

Spark. Pr'ythee, Frank, dost think my wife, that shall be, there, a fine person?

Harc. I could gaze upon her, till I became as blind as you are.

Spark. How, as I am? how?

Harc. Because you are a lover; and true lovers are blind.

Spark. True, true; but by the world she has wit too, as well as beauty; go, go with her into a corner, and try if she has wit; talk to her any thing, she's bashful before me. [Harcourt *courts* Alithea *aside.*

Enter MOODY.

Moody. How, sir, if you are not concerned for the honour of a wife, I am for that of a sister;—be a pander to your own wife, bring men to her, let 'em make love before your face, thrust 'em into a corner together, then leave 'em in private! is this your town wit and conduct?

Spark. Ha, ha, ha! a silly wise rogue would make one laugh more than a stark fool: ha, ha, ha! I shall burst. Nay, you shall not disturb 'em; I'll vex thee, by the world. What have you done with Belville?

[*Struggles with* Moody, *to keep him from* Harcourt *and* Alithea.

Moody. Shew him the way out of my house, as you should to that gentleman.

Spark. Nay, but pr'ythee—let me reason with thee.

[*Talks aside with* Moody.

Alith. The writings are drawn, sir, settlements made; 'tis too late, sir, and past all revocation.

Harc. Then so is my death.

Alith. I would not be unjust to him.

Harc. Then why to me so.

Alith. I have no obligations to you.

Harc. My love.

Alith. I had this before.

Harc. You never had it; he wants, you see, jealousy, the only infallible sign of it.

Alith. Love proceeds from esteem; he cannot distrust my virtue; besides, he loves me, or he would not marry me.

Harc. Marrying you is no more a sign of his love, than bribing your woman that he may marry you, is a sign of his generosity. But if you take marriage for a sign of love, take it from me immediately.

Alith. No, now you have put a scruple in my head: but in short, sir, to end our dispute, I must marry him! my reputation would suffer in the world else.

Harc. No; if you do marry him, with your pardon, madam, your reputation suffers in the world.

Alith. Nay, now you are rude, sir.—Mr. Sparkish, pray come hither, your friend here is very troublesome, and very loving.

Harc. Hold, hold. [*Aside to* Alithea.

Moody. D'ye hear that, senseless puppy?

Spark. Why, d'ye think I'll seem jealous like a country bumkin?

Moody. No, rather be dishonour'd, like a credulous driveller.

Harc. Madam, you would not have been so little generous as to have told him?

Alith. Yes, since you could be so little generous as to wrong him.

Harc. Wrong him! no man can do't, he's beneath an injury; a bubble, a coward, a senseless idiot, a wretch so contemptible to all the world but you, that———

Alith. Hold, do not rail at him; for since he is like to be my husband, I am resolved to like him: nay, I think I am obliged to tell him, you are not his friend—Mr. Sparkish, Mr. Sparkish!

Spark. What, what: now, dear rogue, has not she wit?

Harc. Not so much as I thought, and hoped she had. [*Surlily.*

Alith. Mr. Sparkish, do you bring people to rail at you?

Harc. Madam!

Spark. How! no; but if he does rail at me, 'tis but in jest, I warrant: what we wits do for one another, and never take any notice of it.

Alith. He spoke so scurrilously of you, I had no patience to hear him.

Moody. And he was in the right on't.

Alith. Besides, he has been making love to me.

Moody. And I told the fool so.

Harc. True, damn'd tell-tale woman. [*Aside.*

Spark. Pshah, to shew his parts—We wits rail and make love often, but to shew our parts; as we have no affections, so we have no malice, we——

Moody. Did you ever hear such an ass!

Alith. He said you were a wretch, below an injury.

Spark. Pshaw.

Harc. Madam!

Alith. A common bubble.

Spark. Pshaw.

Alith. A coward!

Spark. Pshaw, pshaw!

Alith. A senseless drivelling idiot.

Moody. True, true, true; all true.

Spark. How! did he disparage my parts? nay, then my honour's concern'd. I can't put up that, sir, by the world, brother, help me to kill him.

[*Offers to draw.*

Alith. Hold! hold!

Spark. What, what?

Alith. Hold! hold!

Moody. If Harcourt would but kill Sparkish, and run away with my sister, I should be rid of three plagues at once.

Alith. Indeed, to tell the truth, the gentleman said, after all, that what he spoke was but out of friendship to you.

Spark. How! say I am a fool, that is no wit, out of friendship to me?

Alith. Yes, to try whether I was concerned enough for you; and made love to me only to be satisfied of my virtue, for your sake.

Harc. Kind, however! [*Aside.*

Spark. Nay, if it were so, my dear rogue, I ask thee pardon; but why would you not tell me so, faith?

Harc. Because I did not think on't, faith!

Spark. Come, Belville is gone away; Harcourt, let's be gone to the new play—Come, madam.

Alith. I will not go, if you intend to leave me alone in the box, and run all about the house, as you use to do.

Spark. Pshaw, I'll leave Harcourt with you in the box, to entertain you, and that's as good; if I sat in the box, I should be thought no critic—I must run about, my dear, and abuse the author—Come away, Harcourt, lead her down. B'ye, brother.

[*Exeunt* Harcourt, Sparkish, *and* Alithea.

Moody. B'ye, driveler. Well, go thy ways, for the flower of the true town fops, such as spend their estates before they come to 'em, and are cuckolds before they're married. But let me go look to my freehold.

Enter a Countryman.

Countr. Master, your worship's servant—here is the lawyer, counsellor gentleman, with a green bag full of papers, come again, and would be glad to speak to you.

Moody. Now here's some other damn'd impediment,

which the law has thrown in our way——I shall never marry the girl, nor get clear of the smoke and wickedness of this cursed town. Where is he?

Countr. He's below in a coach, with three other lawyer, counsellor gentlemen. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Changes to another chamber. Enter Miss PEGGY *and* LUCY.

Lucy. What ails you, Miss Peggy? You are grown quite melancholy.

Peg. Would it not make any one melancholy to see your mistress Alithea go every day fluttering about abroad to plays and assemblies, and I know not what, whilst I must stay at home, like a poor, lonely, sullen bird in a cage?

Lucy. Dear Miss Peggy, I thought you chose to be confined: I imagined that you had been bred so young to the cage, that you had no pleasure in flying about, and hopping in the open air, as other young ladies, who go a little wild about this town.

Peg. Nay, I confess I was quiet enough, till somebody told me what pure lives the London ladies lead, with their dancing meetings, and junketings, and dress'd every day in their best gowns; and I warrant you play at nine-pins every day in the week, so they do.

Lucy. To be sure, miss, you will lead a better life

when join'd in holy wedlock with your sweet-temper'd guardian, the cheerful Mr. Moody.

Peg. I can't lead a worse, that's one good thing—but I must make the best of a bad market, for I can't marry nobody else.

Lucy. How so, miss? that's very strange.

Peg. Why we have a contraction to one another—so we are as good as married, you know——

Lucy. I know it! Heaven forbid, miss——

Peg. Heigho!

Lucy. Don't sigh, Miss Peggy—if that young gentleman, who was here just now, would take pity on me, I'd throw such a contract as yours behind the fire.

Peg. Lord bless us, how you talk!

Lucy. Young Mr. Belville would make you talk otherwise, if you knew him.

Peg. Mr. Belville!—where is he?—when did you see him?—you have undone me, Lucy—where was he? did he say any thing?

Lucy. Say any thing! very little, indeed—he's quite distracted, poor young creature! He was talking with your guardian just now.

Peg. The deuce he was!—but where was it, and when was it?

Lucy. In this house, five minutes ago, when your guardian turn'd you into your chamber, for fear of your being seen.

Peg. I knew something was the matter, I was in such a flutter.——But what did he say to my Bud?—

Lucy. What do you call him Bud for? Bud means husband, and he is not your husband yet—and I hope never will be; and if he was my husband, I'd bud him, a surly, unreasonable beast.

Peg. I'd call him any names, to keep him in good humour; if he'd let me marry any body else, (which I can't do) I'd call him husband as long as he lived. —But what said Mr. Belville to him?

Lucy. I don't know what he said to him, but I'll tell you what he said to me, with a sigh, and his hand upon his breast, as he went out of the door:—If you ever were in love, young gentlewoman, (meaning me) and can pity a most faithful lover, tell the dear object of my affections———

Peg. Meaning me, Lucy?

Lucy. Yes, you, to be sure. Tell the dear object of my affections, I live but upon the hopes that she is not married; and when those hopes leave me——she knows the rest——then he cast up his eyes thus—gnash'd his teeth—struck his forehead—would have spoke again, but could not—fetch'd a deep sigh, and vanish'd.

Peg. That is really very fine—I'm sure it makes my heart sink within me, and brings tears into my eyes—O, he's a charming sweet——but hush, hush, I hear my husband!

Lucy. Don't call him husband. Go into the Park this evening, if you can.

Peg. Mum, mum———

Enter MOODY.

Moody. Come, what's here to do? you are putting the town pleasures in her head, and setting her a longing.

Lucy. Yes, after nine-pins; you suffer none to give her those longings you mean, but yourself.

Moody. Come, Mrs. Flippant, good precepts are lost when bad examples are still before us: the liberty your mistress takes abroad makes her hanker after it, and out of humour at home: poor wretch! she desired not to come to London; I would bring her.

Lucy. O yes, you surfeit her with pleasures.

Moody. She has been this fortnight in town, and never desired, till this afternoon, to go abroad.

Lucy. Was she not at the play yesterday?

Moody. Yes, but she never ask'd me: I was myself the cause of her going.

Lucy. Then if she ask you again, you are the cause of her asking, and not my mistress.

Moody. Well, next week I shall be rid of you all, rid of this town, and my dreadful apprehensions. Come, be not melancholy, for thou shalt go into the country very soon, dearest.

Peg. Pish! what d'ye tell me of the country for?

Moody. How's this! what, flout at the country?

Peg. Let me alone, I am not well.

Moody. O, if that be all——what ails my dearest?

Peg. Truly, I don't know; but I have not been

well since you told me there was a gallant at the play in love with me.

Moody. Ha!

Lucy. That's my mistress too.

Moody. Nay, if you are not well, but are so concern'd because a raking fellow chanced to lie, and say he liked you, you'll make me sick too.

Peg. Of what sickness?

Moody. O, of that which is worse than the plague, jealousy.

Peg. Pish, you jeer: I'm sure there's no such disease in your receipt-book at home.

Moody. No, thou never metst with it, poor innocent.

Peg. Well, but pray, Bud, let's go to a play to-night.

Moody. No, no;—no more plays.—But why are you so eager to see a play?

Peg. Faith, dear, not that I care one pin for their talk there; but I like to look upon the player men, and would see, if I could, the gallant you say loves me: that's all, dear Bud.

Moody. Is that all, dear Bud?

Lucy. This proceeds from my mistress's example.

Peg. Let's go abroad, however, dear Bud, if we don't go to the play.

Moody. Come, have a little patience, and thou shalt go into the country next week.

Peg. Therefore I would see first some sights, to tell my neighbours of: nay, I will go abroad, that's once.

Moody. What, you have put this i nto her head?

Lucy. Heaven defend me, what sus picions! somebody has put more things into your head than you ought to have.

Moody. Your tongue runs too glibly, ma dam, and you have lived too long with a London lady, to be a proper companion for Innocence. I am not over-fond of your mistress.

Lucy. There's no love lost between us.

Moody. You admitted those gentlemen into the house, when I said I would not be at home; and there was the young fellow too, who behaved so indecently to my wife at the tavern-window.

Lucy. Because you would not let him see your handsome wife out of your lodgings.

Peg. Why, O Lord! did the gentleman come hither to see me indeed?

Moody. No, no; you are not the cause of that damn'd question too.

Peg. Come, pray, Bud, let's go abroad before 'tis late; for I will go, that's flat and plain—only into the Park.

Moody. So! the obstinacy already of the town-wife; and I must, whilst she's here, humour her like one. [*Aside.*] How shall we do, that she may not be seen or known?

Lucy. Muffle her up with a bonnet and handkerchief, and I'll go with her to avoid suspicion.

Moody. No, no, I am obliged to you for your kindness, but she shan't stir without me.

Lucy. What will you do then?

Peg. What, shall we go? I am sick with staying at home: if I don't walk in the park, I'll do nothing that I'm bid for a week—I won't be mop'd.

Lucy. O, she has a charming spirit! I could stand your friend now, and would, if you had ever a civil word to give me.

Moody. I'll give thee a better thing, I'll give thee a guinea for thy good advice, if I like it; and I can have the best of the college for the same money.

Lucy. I despise a bribe—when I am your friend, it shall be without fee or reward.

Peg. Don't be long then, for I will go out.

Lucy. The taylor brought home last night the clothes you intend for a present to your godson in the country.

Peg. You must not tell that, Lucy.

Lucy. But I will, madam—When you were with your lawyers last night, Miss Peggy, to divert me and herself, put 'em on, and they fitted her to a hair.

Moody. Thank you, thank you, Lucy, 'tis the luckiest thought! go this moment, Peggy, into your chamber, and put 'em on again—and you shall walk with me into the park, as my godson. Well thought of, Lucy—I shall love you for ever for this.

Peg. And so shall I too, Lucy, I'll put 'em on directly. [*Going, returns.*] Suppose, Bud, I must keep on my petticoats, for fear of shewing my legs.

Moody. No, no, you fool, never mind your legs.

Peg. No more, I will then, Bud——This is pure.

[*Exit rejoiced.*

Moody. What a simpleton it is! Well, Lucy, I thank you for the thought, and before I leave London, thou shalt be convinced how much I am obliged to thee. [*Exit smiling.*

Lucy. And before you leave London, Mr. Moody, I hope I shall convince you how much you are obliged to me. [*Exit.*

ACT III. SCENE I.

Enter BELVILLE, *and* HARCOURT.

Belville.

AND the moment Moody left me, I took an opportunity of conveying some tender sentiments thro' Lucy, to Miss Peggy, and here I am, in expectation of seeing my country goddess.

Harc. And so to blind Moody, and take him off the scent of your passion for this girl, and at the same time, to give me an opportunity with Sparkish's mistress, (and of which I have made the most) you hinted to him with a grave melancholy face, that you were dying for his sister—Gad-a mercy, nephew! I will back thy modesty against any other in the three kingdoms—It will do, Dick.

Belv. What could I do, uncle?—it was my last stake, and I played for a great deal.

Harc. You mistake me, Dick———I don't say you could do better——I only can't account for your modesty's doing so much; you have done such wonders, that I, who am rather bold than sheepish, have not yet ceased wondering at you. But do you think that you imposed upon him?

Belv. Faith, I can't say——I am rather doubtful; he said very little, grumbled much, shook his head, and shewed me the door. But what success have you had with Alithea?

Harc. Just enough to have a glimmering of hope, without having light enough to see an inch before my nose.———This day will produce something; Alithea is a woman of great honour, and will sacrifice her happiness to it, unless Sparkish's absurdity stands my friend, and does every thing that the fates ought to do for me.

Belv. Yonder comes the prince of coxcombs, and if your mistress and mine should by chance, be tripping this way, this fellow will spoil sport——let us avoid him—you can't cheat him before his face.

Harc. But I can tho', thanks to my wit, and his want of it.

Belv. But you cannot come near his mistress but in his company.

Harc. Still the better for me, nephew, for fools are most easily cheated, when they themselves are accessaries; and he is to be bubbled of his mistress, or of his money, the (common mistress) by keeping him company.

Enter SPARKISH.

Spark. Who's that that is to be bubbled? faith, let me snack; I han't met with a bubble since Christmas. 'Gad, I think bubbles are like their brother-woodcocks, go out with the cold weather.

Harc. O pox! he did not hear all, I hope.
[*Aside to* Belville

Spark. Come, you bubbling rogues, you, where do we sup? O Harcourt, my mistress tells me you have made love, fierce love to her last night, all the play long; ha, ha, ha! but I——

Harc. I make love to her!——

Spark. Nay, I forgive thee, and I know her, but I am sure I know myself.

Belv. Do you, sir? Then you are the wisest man in the world, and I honour you as such. [*Bowing.*

Spark. O your servant, sir, you are at your raillery, are you? You can't oblige me more—I'm your man—He'll meet with his match—Ha! Harcourt!—Did not you hear me laugh prodigiously at the play last night?

Harc. Yes, and was very much disturbed at it.—You put the actors and audience into confusion—and All your friends out of countenance.

Spark. So much the better—I love confusion—and to see folks out of countenance—I was in tip-top spirits, faith, and said a thousand good things.

Belv. But I thought you had gone to plays to laugh at the poet's good things, and not at your own.

Spark. Your servant, sir: no, I thank you. 'Gad I go to a play, as to a country treat: I carry my own wine to one, and my own wit to t'other, or else I'm sure I should not be merry at either: and the reason why we are so often louder than the players, is, because we hate authors damnably.

Belv. But why should you hate the poor rogues? you have too much wit, and despise writing I'm sure.

Spark. O yes, I despise writing. But women, women, that make men do all foolish things, make 'em write songs too. Every body does it: 'tis e'en as common with lovers, as playing with fans, and you can no more help rhyming to your Phillis, than drinking to your Phillis.

Harc. But the poets damn'd your songs, did they?

Spark. O yes, damn the poets; they turn'd them into burlesque, as they call it: that burlesque, is a hocus pocus trick they have got, which, by the virtue of hictius doctius, topsy turvy, they make a clever witty thing, absolute nonsense! Do you know, Harcourt, that they ridiculed my last song, *twang, twang*, the best I ever wrote?

Harc. That may be, and be very easily ridiculed for all that.

Belv. Favour me with it, sir, I never heard it.

Spark. What, and have all the park about us?

Harc. Which you'll not dislike, and so, pr'ythee, begin.

Spark. I never am ask'd twice, and so have at you.

SONG.

Tell not me of the roses and lilies,
Which tinge the fair cheek of your Phillis,
Tell not me of the dimples, and eyes,
For which silly Corydon dies;
Let all whining lovers go hang,
My heart would you hit,
Tip your arrow with wit,
And it comes to my heart with a twang, twang,
And it comes to my heart with a twang.

I am rock to the handsome, and pretty,
Can only be touch'd by the witty;
And beauty will ogle in vain,
The way to my heart's thro' my brain.
Let all whining lovers go hang,
We wits, you must know,
Have too strings to our bow,
To return them their darts with a twang, twang.
And return them their darts with a twang.

At the end of the song Harcourt *and* Belville *steal away from* Sparkish, *and leave him singing——He sinks his voice by degrees, at the surprise of their being gone; then*

Enter HARCOURT *and* BELVILLE.

Spark. What the deuce did you go away for?

Harc. Your mistress is coming.

Spark. The devil she is—O hide, hide me from her. [*Hides behind* Harcourt.

Harc. She sees you.

Spark. But I will not see her: for I'm engaged, and at this instant. [*Looking at his watch.*

Harc. Pray first take me, and reconcile me to her.

Spark. Another time; faith, it is to a lady, and one cannot make excuses to a woman.

Belv. You have need of 'em, I believe.

Spark. Pshaw, pr'ythee hide me.

Enter MOODY, PEGGY *(in boy's cloaths) and* ALITHEA.

Harc. Your servant, Mr. Moody.

Moody. Come along—— [*To* Peggy.

Peg. Lau!—what a sweet delightful place this is!

Moody. Come along, I say——don't stare about you so——you'll betray yourself——

[*Exit* Moody *pulling* Peggy, Alithea *following.*

Harc. He does not know us——

Belv. Or he won't know us——

Spark. So much the better—— [*Ex.* Bel. *after them.*

Harc. Who is that pretty youth with him, Sparkish?

Spark. Some relation of Peggy's, I suppose, for he is something like her in the face and gawkiness.

Re-enter BELVILLE.

Belv. By all my hopes, uncle—Peggy in boy's clothes—I am all over agitation. [*Aside to* Harc.

Harc. Be quiet, or you'll spoil all. They return ——Alithea has seen you, Sparkish, and will be

angry if you don't go to her: besides, I would fain be reconciled to her, which none but you can do, my dear friend.

Spark. Well, that's a better reason, dear friend: I would not go near her now for hers or my own sake; but I can deny you nothing: for tho' I have known thee a great while, never go, if I do not love thee as well as a new acquaintance.

Harc. I am obliged to you, indeed, my dear friend: I would be well with her, only to be well with thee still; for these ties to wives usually dissolve all ties to friends.

Spark. But they shan't, tho'——Come along.

[*They retire.*

Re-enter MOODY, PEGGY, *and* ALITHEA.

Moody. Sister, if you will not go, we must leave you: [*To* Alithea.]—The fool her gallant and she will muster up all the young saunterers of this place. What a swarm of cuckolds and cuckold-makers are here! I begin to be uneasy. [*Aside.*] Come let's be gone, Peggy.

Peg. Don't you believe that, I han't half my belly-ful of sights yet.

Moody. Then walk this way.

Peg. Lord, what a power of fine folks are here. And Mr. Belville, as I hope to be married. [*Aside.*

Moody. Come along, what are you a muttering at?

Peg. There's the young gentleman there, you were so angry about——that's in love with me.

Moody. No, no, he's a dangler after your sister—or pretends to be—but they are all bad alike——Come along, I say. [*He pulls her away.*

[*Exeunt* Peggy, *and* Moody. Belville *following.*

SPARKISH, HARCOURT, *and* ALITHEA *come forward.*

Spark. Come, dear madam, for my sake you shall be reconciled to him.

Alith. For your sake I hate him.

Harc. That's something too cruel, madam, to hate me, for his sake.

Spark. Ay, indeed, madam, too, too cruel to me, to hate my friend for my sake.

Alith. I hate him, because he is your enemy; and you ought to hate him too, for making love to me, if you love me.

Spark. That's a good one! I hate a man for loving you! If he did love you, 'tis but what he can't help; and 'tis your fault, not his, if he admires you.

Alith. Is it for your honour, or mine, to suffer a man to make love to me, who am to marry you to-morrow.

Harc. But why, dearest madam, will you be more concerned for his honour than he is himself? Let his honour alone for my sake and his. He has no honour.

Spark. How's that?

Harc. But what my dear friend can guard himself.

Spark. O ho——that's right again.

Alith. You astonish me, sir, with want of jealousy.

Spark. And you make me giddy, madam, with your jealousy and fears, and virtue and honour: 'Gad, I see virtue makes a woman as troublesome as a little reading or learning.

Harc. Come, madam, you see you strive in vain to make him jealous of me: my dear friend is the kindest creature in the world to me.

Spark. Poor fellow!

Harc. But his kindness only is not enough for me, without your favour, your good opinion, dear madam: 'tis that must perfect my happiness. Good gentleman, he believes all I say: wou'd you would do so.—Jealous of me! I would not wrong him nor you for the world.

Spark. Look you there: hear him, hear him, and not walk away so. Come back again.

[Alithea *walks carelessly to and fro.*

Harc. I love you, madam, so———

Spark. How's that! nay—now you begin to go too far indeed.

Harc. So much, I confess, I say I love you, that I would not have you miserable, and cast yourself away upon so unworthy and inconsiderable a thing as what you see here.

[*Clapping his hand on his breast, points to* Sparkish.

Spark. No, faith, I believe thou wouldst not; now his meaning is plain; but I knew before thou wouldst not wrong me, nor her.

Harc. No, no, Heavens forbid the glory of her sex should fall so low, as into the embraces of such a con-

temptible wretch, the least of mankind—my dear friend here—I injure him.

Alith. Very well. [*Embracing* Sparkish.

Spark. No, no, dear friend, I knew it: madam, you see he will rather wrong himself than me in giving himself such names.

Alith. Do not you understand him yet?

Spark. Come, come, you shall stay till he has saluted you; that I may be assured you are friends, after his honest advice and declaration: come, pray, madam, be friends with him.

Enter MOODY *and* PEGGY. BELVILLE *at a distance.*

Moody. What, invite your wife to kiss men? Monstrous! Are you not ashamed?

Spark. Are you not ashamed, that I should have more confidence in the chastity of your family, than you have? You must not teach me, I am a man of honour, sir, though I am frank and free; I am frank, sir——

Moody. Very frank, sir, to share your wife with your friends.—You seem to be angry, and yet won't go. [*To* Alithea.

Alith. No impertinence shall drive me away.

Moody. Because you like it.—But you ought to blush at exposing your wife as you do.

Spark. What then? It may be I have a pleasure in't, as I have to shew fine clothes at a play-house, the first day, and count money before poor rogues.

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Moody. He that shews his wife or money, will be in danger of having them borrowed sometimes.

Spark. I love to be envied, and would not marry a wife that I alone could love. Loving alone is as dull as eating alone; and so good-night, for I must to Whitehall.—Madam, I hope you are now reconciled to my friend; and so I wish you a good night, madam, and sleep if you can; for to-morrow, you know, I must visit you early with a canonical gentleman. Good night, dear Harcourt—remember to send your brother. [*Exit* Sparkish.

Harc. You may depend upon me. Madam, I hope you will not refuse my visit to-morrow, if it should be earlier, with a canonical gentleman, than Mr. Sparkish?

Moody. This gentlewoman is yet under my care, therefore you must yet forbear your freedom with her.

Harc. Must, sir!

Moody. Yes, sir, she is my sister.

Harc. 'Tis well she is, sir——for I must be her servant, sir.——Madam——

Moody. Come away, sister, we had been gone if it had not been for you, and so avoided these lewd rake-hells, who seem to haunt us.

Harc. I see a little time in the country makes a man turn wild and unsociable, and only fit to converse with his horses, dogs, and his herds.

Moody. I have business, sir, and must mind it: your business is pleasure, therefore you and I must go different ways.

Harc. Well, you may go on; but this pretty young gentleman [*takes hold of* Peggy] shall stay with us, for I suppose his business is the same with ours, pleasure.

Moody. 'Sdeath, he knows her, she carries it so sillily; yet if he does not, I should be more silly to discover it first. [*Aside.*] Come, come.

Harc. Had you not rather stay with us? [*To* Peggy.] Prythee, who is this pretty young fellow?

Moody. One to whom I am a guardian.—I wish I could keep her out of your hands. [*Aside.*

Harc. Who is he? I never saw any thing so pretty in all my life.

Moody. Pshaw, do no look upon him so much, he's a poor bashful youth, you'll put him out of countenance. [*Offers to take her away.*

Harc. Here, nephew, let me introduce this young gentleman to your acquaintance—You are very like, and of the same age, and should know one another—Salute him, Dick, à la Françoise. [Belville *kisses her.*

Moody. I hate French fashions. Men kiss one another. [*Endeavours to take hold of her.*

Peg. I am out of my wits——What do you kiss me for? I am no woman.

Harc. But you are ten times handsomer.

Peg. Nay, now you jeer one; and pray don't jeer me.

Harc. Kiss him again, Dick.

Moody. No, no, no; come away, come away. [*To* Peggy.

Harc. Why, what haste are you in? Why won't you let me talk with him?

Moody. Because you'll debauch him, he's yet young and innocent. How she gazes upon him! The devil! [*Aside.*] Come, pray let him go, I cannot stay fooling any longer; I tell you my wife stays supper for us.

Harc. Does she? Come then, we'll all go sup with her.

Moody. No, no—now I think on't, having staid so long for us, I warrant she's gone to bed.—I wish she and I were well out of your hands. [*Aside.*

Harc. Well then, if she be gone to bed—I wish her and you a good night. But pray, young gentleman, present my humble service to her.

Peg. Thank you heartily, sir. [*Bowing.*

Moody. 'Sdeath, she will discover herself yet in spite of me. [*Aside.*

Belv. And mine too, sir.

Peg. That I will, indeed. [*Bowing.*

Harc. Pray, give her this kiss for me.

[*Kisses* Peggy.

Moody. O heavens! what do I suffer?

Belv. And this for me. [*Kisses* Peggy.

Peg. Thank you, sir. [*Curtesies.*

Moody. O the idiot—now 'tis out—Ten thousand cankers gnaw away their lips. Come, come, driveler.

[*Exeunt* Moody, Peggy *and* Alithea.

Harc. and *Belv.* Ha, ha, ha!—— [*Exeunt.*

Re-enter Moody, Peggy, *and* Alithea.

Moody. So, they are gone, at last.—Sister, stay with

Peggy—'till I find my servant—don't let her stir an inch, I'll be back directly, [*Exit* Moody.

Re-enter HARCOURT *and* BELVILLE.

Harc. What, not gone yet?—Nephew, shew the young gentleman Rosamond's pond, while I speak another word to this lady.

Belv. Shall I have that pleasure.

Peg. With all my heart and soul, sir.

[*Exeunt* Belville *and* Peggy.

Alith. I cannot consent to it, indeed.

Harc. Let 'em look upon the place where so many despairing lovers have been destroy'd—You must indulge them—and me too in a few words.

[Alithea *and* Harcourt *struggle.*

Alith. My brother will go distracted.

Harc. My nephew is a very modest young man, you may depend upon his prudence.

Alith. Modest, prudent, and your nephew—I can't believe it, and I must follow them.—— [*Going.*

Re-enter MOODY.

Moody. Where! how!—what's become of—gone—whither?——

Alith. In the next walk only, brother.

Moody. Only, only, where, where? [*Exit.*

Harc. What's the matter with him? Why so much concerned? But, dearest madam——

Re-enter MOODY.

Moody. Gone, gone, not to be found; quite gone; ten thousand plagues go with 'em; which way went they?

Alith. But in t'other walk, brother.

Moody. T'other walk—t'other devil. Where are they, I say?

Alith. You are too abusive brother, and too violent about trifles.

Moody. You know where they are, you infamous wretch, eternal shame of your family; which you do not dishonour enough yourself, you think, but you must help her to it too, thou legion of———

Alith. Good brother———

Moody. Damn'd, damn'd sister!——— [*Exit.*

Alith. Shew me to my chair, Mr. Harcourt—His scurrility has overpower'd me—I will get rid of his tyranny and your importunities, and give my hand to Sparkish to-morrow morning. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Changes to another part of the Park. Enter BELVILLE *and Miss* PEGGY.

Belv. No disguise could conceal you from my heart; I pretended not to know you, that I might deceive the dragon that continually watches over you—

but now he's asleep, let us fly from misery to happiness.

Peg. Indeed, Mr. Belville, as well as I like you, I can't think of going away with you so—and as much as I hate my guardian, I must take leave of him a little handsomely, or he will kill me, so he will.

Belv. But, dear Miss Peggy, think of your situation; if we don't make the best use of this opportunity, we never may have another.

Peg. Ay, but Mr. Belville—I am as good as married already—my guardian has contracted me, and there wants nothing but church ceremony to make us one—I call him husband, and he calls me wife already: he made me do so;—and we had been married in church long ago, if the writings could have been finish'd.

Belv. That's his deceit, my sweet creature—He pretends to have married you, for fear of your liking any body else—You have a right to choose for yourself, and there is no law in heaven or earth that binds you before marriage to a man you cannot like.

Peg. I'fack, no more I believe it does; sister Alithea's maid has told me as much—she's a very sensible girl.

Belv. You are in the very jaws of perdition, and nothing but running away can avoid it——the law will finish your chains to-morrow, and the church will rivet them the day after——Let us secure our happiness by escape, and love and fortune will do the rest for us.

Peg. These are fine sayings, to be sure, Mr. Belville; but how shall we get my fortune out of Bud's clutches? We must be a little cunning; 'tis worth trying for—We can at any time run away without it.

Belv. I see by your fears, my dear Peggy, that you live in awe of this brutal guardian; and if he has you once more in his possession, both you and your fortune are secured to him for ever.

Peg. Ay, but it shan't tho'—I thank him for that.

Belv. If you marry without his consent, he can but seize upon half your fortune—The other half, and a younger brother's fortune, with a treasure of love, are our own—Take it, my sweetest Peggy, and this moment, or we shall be divided for ever.

[*Kneels and presses her hand.*

Peg. I'fackins, but we won't—Your fine talk has bewitch'd me.

Belv. 'Tis you have bewitch'd me—thou dear, enchanting, sweet simplicity——Let us fly with the wings of love to my house there, and we shall be safe for ever.

Peg. And so we will then—there squeeze me again by the hand; now run away with me, and if my guardy follows us, the devil take the hindmost, I say. [*Going.*] Boo! here he is.

Enter MOODY *hastily, and meets them.*

Moody. O! there's my stray'd sheep, and the wolf again in sheep's clothing!—Now I have recovered her, I shall come to my senses again—Where have you been, you puppy?

Peg. Been, Bud?—We have been hunting all over the park to find you.

Belv. From one end to the other, sir. [*Confusedly.*

Moody. But not where I was to be found, you young devil you—Why did you start when you saw me?

Peg. I'm always frighten'd when I see you, and if I did not love you so well—I should run away from you, so I should. [*Pouting.*

Moody. But I'll take care you don't.

Peg. This gentleman has a favour to beg of you, Bud? [Belville *makes signs of dislike.*

Moody. I am not in the humour to grant favours to young gentlemen, tho' you may. What have you been doing with this young lady?—gentleman, I would say—Blisters on my tongue!

Peg. Fie, Bud, you have told all.

Belv. I have been as civil as I could to the young stranger; and if you'll permit me, I will take the trouble off your hands, and shew the young spark Rosamond's pond, for he has not seen it yet—Come, pretty youth, will you go with me?

Peg. As my guardian pleases.

Moody. No, no, it does not please me—whatever I think he ought to see, I shall show him myself—You may visit Rosamond's pond, if you will—and the bottom of it, if you will—And so, sir, your humble servant. [*Exeunt* Moody, *with* Peggy *under his arm.*—Belville *a contrary way.*

ACT IV. SCENE I.

MOODY'S *house.* *Enter* LUCY *and* ALITHEA.

Lucy.

WELL, madam, now I have dress'd you, and set you out with so many ornaments, and spent so much time upon you, and all this for no other purpose but to bury you alive; for I look upon Mr. Sparkish's bed to be little better than a grave.

Alith. Hold your peace.

Lucy. Nay, madam, I will ask you the reason why you would banish poor Mr. Harcourt for ever from your sight? how could you be so hard-hearted.

Alith. 'Twas because I was not hard-hearted.

Lucy. No, no; 'twas stark love and kindness, I warrant?

Alith. It was so; I would see him no more, because I love him.

Lucy. Hey-day! a very pretty reason.

Alith. You do not understand me.

Lucy. I wish you may yourself.

Alith. I was engaged to marry, you see, another man, whom my justice will not suffer me to deceive, or injure.

Lucy. Can there be a greater cheat or wrong done to a man, than to give him your person, without your heart? I should make a conscience of it.

Alith. I'll retrieve it for him after I am married.

Lucy. The woman that marries to love better, will be as much mistaken, as the rake that marries to live better.

Alith. What nonsense you talk!

Lucy. 'Tis a melancholy truth, madam,—Marrying to increase love, is like gaming to become rich——— Alas! you only lose what little stock you had before ——There are many woeful examples of it in this righteous town!

Alith. I find by your rhetoric you have been bribed to betray me.

Lucy. Only by his merit, that has bribed your heart, you see, against your word and rigid honour.

Alith. Come, pray talk no more of honour, nor Mr. Harcourt; I wish the other would come to secure my fidelity to him, and his right in me.

Lucy. You will marry him then?

Alith. Certainly; I have given him already my word, and will my hand too, to make it good when he comes.

Lucy. Well, I wish I may never stick a pin more, if he be not an errant natural to t'other fine gentleman.

Alith. I own he wants the wit of Harcourt, which I will dispense withal for another want he has, which is want of jealousy, which men of wit seldom want.

Lucy. Lord, madam, what should you do with a fool to your husband? You intend to be honest, don't you? Then that husbandly virtue, credulity, is thrown away upon you.

Alith. He only that could suspect my virtue, should

have cause to do it; 'tis Sparkish's confidence in my truth, that obliges me to be faithful to him.

Lucy. What, faithful to a creature who is incapable of loving and esteeming you as he ought! To throw away your beauty, wit, accomplishments, sweet temper———

Alith. Hold your tongue.

Lucy. That you know I can't do, madam; and upon this occasion, I will talk for ever—What, give yourself away to one, that poor I, your maid, would not accept of?

Alith. How, Lucy!

Lucy. I would not, upon my honour, madam; 'tis never too late to repent—Take a man, and give up your coxcomb, I say.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Mr. Sparkish, with company, madam, attends you below.

Alith. I will wait upon 'em. [*Exit. Servant.*] My heart begins to fail me, but I must go through with it. Go with me, Lucy. [*Exit.*

Lucy. Not I, indeed, madam——If you will leap the precipice, you shall fall by yourself—What excellent advice have I thrown away!—So I'll e'en take it where it will be more welcome.——Miss Peggy is bent upon mischief against her guardian, and she can't have a better privy-counsellor than myself—I must be busy one way or another. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

Another chamber in MOODY's *house. Enter* MOODY *and* PEGGY.

Moody. I saw him kiss your hand before you saw me. This pretence of liking my sister was all a blind—the young abandon'd hypocrite! [*Aside.*] Tell me, I say, for I know he likes you, and was hurrying you to his house—tell me, I say,———

Peg. Lord, han't I told it a hundred times over?

Moody. I would try if, in the repetition of the ungrateful tale, I could find her altering it in the least circumstance; for if her story be false, she is so too. [*Aside.*] Come, how was't, baggage?

Peg. Lord, what a pleasure you take to hear it, sure?

Moody. No, you take more in telling it, I find; but speak, how was't? No lies—I saw him kiss you—he kiss'd you before my face.

Peg. Nay, you need not be so angry with him neither; for, to say truth, he has the sweetest breath I ever knew.

Moody. The devil!—you were satisfied with it then, and would do it again?———

Peg. Not unless he should force me.

Moody. Force you, changeling.

Peg. If I had struggled too much, you know—he would have known I had been a woman; so I was quiet, for fear of being found out.

Moody. If you had been in petticoats, you would have knock'd him down, would not you?

Peg. With what, Bud?——I could not help myself—besides, he did it so modestly, and blush'd so—that I almost thought him a girl in men's clothes, and upon his mummery too, as well as me—and if so, there was no harm done, you know.

Moody. This is worse and worse—so 'tis plain she loves him, yet she has not love enough to make her conceal it from me; but the sight of him will increase her aversion for me, and love for him; and that love instruct her how to deceive, me, and satisfy him, all idiot as she is: Love, 'twas he gave women first their craft, their art of deluding; out of Nature's hands they came plain, open, silly, and fit for slaves, as she and Heav'n intended 'em, but damn'd Love—well—I must strangle that little monster, whilst I can deal with him. [*Aside.*]—Go, fetch pen, ink, and paper, out of the next room.

Peg. Yes, I will, Bud. What's the matter now? [*Aside.*

Moody. Why don't you go?

Peg. I'm going. [*Exit.*

Moody. This young fellow loves her, and she loves him—the rest is all hypocrisy——How the young modest villain endeavour'd to deceive me! But I'll crush this mischief in the shell—Why should women have more invention in love than men? It can only be, because they have more desire, more soliciting passions, more of the devil. [*Aside.*] [*Enter* Peggy, *with pen, ink, and paper.*] Come, minx, sit down and write.

Peg. Ay, dear, dear Bud; but I can't do't very well.

Moody. I wish you could not at all.

Peg. But what should I write to?

Moody. I'll have you write a letter to this young man.

Peg. O Lord, to the young gentleman a letter.

Moody. Yes, to the young gentleman.

Peg. Lord, you do but jeer: sure you jest.

Moody. I am not so merry: come, sit down, and write as I bid you.

Peg. What do you think I am a fool?

Moody. She's afraid I would not dictate any love to him, therefore she's unwilling. [*Aside.*]—But you had best begin.

Peg. Indeed and indeed but I won't so I won't.

Moody. Why?

Peg. Because he's in town; you may send for him here, if you will.

Moody. Very well, you would have him brought to you?—is it come to this; I say, take the pen and ink and write, or you'll provoke me.

Peg. Lord, what do you make a fool of me for? Don't I know that letters are never writ but from the country to London, and from London into the country? now he's in town, and I am in town too, therefore I can't write to him, you know.

Moody. So, I am glad it is no worse; she is innocent enough yet. [*Aside.*] Yes, you may, when your husband bids, write letters to people who are in town.

Peg. O may I so! then I am satisfied.

Moody. Come, begin—*Sir*— [*Dictates.*

Peg. Shan't I say, *Dear Sir?* you know one says always something more than bare Sir.

Moody. Write as I bid you, or I will write something with this pen-knife in your face.

Peg. Nay, good Gud—*Sir*— [*Writes.*

Moody. *Though I suffered last night your nauseous loath'd kisses and embraces*—Write!

Peg. Nay, why should I say so? you know I told you he had a sweet breath.

Moody. Write!

Peg. Let me put out *loath'd.*

Moody. Write I say.

Peg. Well then. [*Writes.*

Moody. Let me see what you have writ. *Tho' I suffered last night your kisses and embraces*—[*Reads the paper.*] Thou impudent creature, where is *nauseous* and *loath'd?*

Peg. I can't abide to write such filthy words.

Moody. Once more write as I'd have you, and question it not, or I will spoil your writing with this; I will stab out those eyes that cause my mischief.

[*Holds up the pen-knife.*

Peg. O Lord, I will.

Moody. So—so—let's see now? *tho' I suffered last night your nauseous loath'd kisses and embraces*; go on, —*yet I would not have you presume that you shall ever repeat them*——so [*She writes.*

Peg. I have writ it.

Moody. O then—*I then concealed myself from your knowledge, to avoid your insolencies*—— [*She writes.*

Peg. *To avoid*———

Moody. *Your insolencies*———

Peg. *Your insolencies.* [*Writes.*

Moody. *The same reason, now I am out of your hands*—

Peg. So——— [*She writes.*

Moody. *Makes me own to you my unfortunate*—*tho' innocent frolic of being in man's clothes.* [*She writes.*

Peg. So———

Moody. *That you may for evermore*——

Peg. *Evermore?*

Moody. *Evermore cease to pursue her, who hates and detests you.* [*She writes.*

Peg. So—h. [*Sighs.*

Moody. What do you sigh for?—*detests you*—*as much as she loves her husband and her honour*—

Peg. I vow, husband, he'll ne'er believe I should write such a letter.

Moody. What, he'd expect a kinder from you? Come, now your name only.

Peg. What, shan't I say your most faithful humble servant till death?

Moody. No, tormenting fiend——Her stile, I find would be very soft. [*Aside.*] Come, wrap it up now, whilst I go fetch wax and a candle, and write on the outside, *For Mr. Belville.* [*Exit* Moody.

Peg. For Mr. Belville.—So—I am glad he is gone—Hark! I hear a noise.

Moody. [*within.*] Well, well, but can't you call again——Well, walk in then.——

Peg. [*goes to the door.*] I'feck there's folks with him—that's pure——now I may think a little———Why should I send dear Mr. Belville such a letter?—Can one have no shift? ah! a London woman would have had a hundred presently.———Stay———what if I should write a letter, and wrap it up like this, and write upon it too?——Ay, but then my guardian would see't——I don't know what to do——But yet y'vads I'll try, so I will—for I will not send this letter to poor Mr. Belville, come what will on't. [*She writes, and repeats what she writes.*] *Dear, sweet, Mr. Belville*—so—*My guardian would have me send you a base, rude letter, but I won't*—so—*and, would have me say, I hate you—but I won't*——there——*for I'm sure if you and I were in the country at cards together*—so—*I could not help treading on your toe under the table*——*so pray keep at home, for I shall be with you as soon as I can*——*so no more at present from one who am, dear, dear, poor, dear Mr. Belville, your loving friend till death, Margaret Thrift.*—So—now wrap it up just like t'other—so—now write, *For Mr. Belville*—But oh! what shall I do with it? for here comes my guardian.

[*Puts the letter in her bosom.*

Enter MOODY, *with a candle and sealing wax.*

Moody. I have been detained by a sparkish coxcomb, who pretended to visit me, but I fear 'twas to my wife. [*Aside.*] What have you done?

Peg. Ay, ay, But, just now.

Moody. Let's see't; what do you tremble for?——

[*He opens and reads the first letter.*

Peg. So I had been served if I had given him this. [*Aside.*

Moody. Come, where's the wax and seal?

Peg. Lord, what shall I do now? Nay, then I have it—[*Aside.*]—pray let me see't. Lord, you think me so errand a fool, I cannot seal a letter; I will do't, so I will. [*Snatches the letter from him, changes it for the other, seals it, and delivers it to him.*]

Moody. Nay, I believe you will learn that and other things too, which I would not have you.

Peg. So, han't I done it curiously? I think I have—there's my letter going to Mr. Belville, since he'll needs have me send letters to folks. [*Aside.*

Moody. 'Tis very well, but I warrant you would not have it go now?

Peg. Yes, indeed, but I would, Bud, now.

Moody. Well, you are a good girl then. Come, let me lock you up in your chamber, till I come back; and be sure you come not within three strides of the window, when I am gone; for I have a spy in the street. [*Puts her into the chamber.*] At least 'tis fit she thinks so; if we do not cheat women, they'll cheat us. ——Now I have secured all within, I'll deal with the foe without, with false intelligence. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.

Changes to BELVILLE'S *lodgings.* *Enter* LUCY *and* BELVILLE.

Lucy. I run great risques, to be sure, to serve the young lady, and you, sir——but I know you are a gentleman of honour, and would scorn to betray a friend who means you well, and is above being mercenary.

Belv. As you are not mercenary, Mrs. Lucy, I ought to be the more generous—give me leave to present you with this trifle, [*gives a ring.*] not as a reward for your services, but as a small token of friendship.

Lucy. Tho' I scorn to be bribed in any cause, yet I am proud to accept it, as a mark of your regard, and as such shall keep it for your sake—and now to business.

Belv. But has the dear creature resolved?

Lucy. Has she—why, she will run away and marry you, in spite of your teeth, the first moment she can break prison—so you, in your turn, must take care not to have your qualms———I have known several bold gentlemen not able to draw their swords, when a challenge has come too quick upon 'em.

Belv. I assure you, Mrs. Lucy, that I am no bully in love, and Miss Peggy will meet with her match, come when she will.

Lucy. Ay, so you all say, but talking does no business—Stay at home till you hear from us.

Belv. Blessings on thee, Lucy, for the thought.

MOODY *speaking without.*

Moody. But I must and will see him, let him have what company he will.

Lucy. As I hope to be married, Mr. Belville, I hear Mr. Moody's voice—Where shall I hide myself?—if he sees me, we are all undone.

Belv. This is our cursed luck again—What the devil can he want here? I have lost my senses—get into this closet till he's gone. [*Puts* Lucy *into the closet.*] This visit means something; I am quite confounded—Don't you stir, Lucy—I must put the best face upon the matter———Now for it———

[*Takes a book and reads.*

Enter MOODY.

Moody. You will excuse me, sir, for breaking thro' forms, and your servant's entreaties, to have the honour—but you are alone, sir—your fellow told me below that you were with company.

Belv. Yes, sir, the best company. [*Shews his book.*] When I converse with my betters, I choose to have 'em alone.

Moody And I chose to interrupt your conversation! the business of my errand must plead my excuse.

Belv. You shall be always welcome to me; but you seem ruffled, sir; what brings you hither, and so seemingly out of humour?

Moody. Your impertinency—I beg pardon—your modesty, I mean.

Belv. My impertinency!

Moody. Your impertinency!

Belv. Sir, from the peculiarity of your character, and your intimacy with my uncle, I shall allow you great privileges; but you must consider, youth has its privileges too; and as I have not the honour of your acquaintance, I am not oblig'd to bear with your ill-humours or your ill-manners.

Moody. They who wrong me, young man, must bear with both! and if you had not made too free with me, I should have taken no liberties with you.

Belv. I could have wish'd, sir, to have found you a little more civil, the first time I have the honour of a visit from you.

Moody. If that is all you want, young gentleman, you will find me very civil indeed! There, sir, read that, and let your modesty declare whether I want either kindness or civility—Look you there, sir.

[*Gives a letter.*

Belv. What is it?

Moody. Only a love-letter, sir;——and from my wife.

Belv. How, is it from your wife?—hum and hum—

[*Reads.*

Moody. Even from my wife, sir; am not I wonderous kind and civil to you now too? But you'll not think her so. [*Aside.*

Belv. Ha! is this a trick of his or her's. [*Aside.*

Moody. The gentleman's surpris'd, I find? what, you expected a kinder letter?

Belv. No, faith, not I; how could I?

Moody. Yes, yes, I'm sure you did; a man so young, and well made as you are, must needs be disappointed, if the women declare not their passion at the first sight or opportunity.

Belv. But what should this mean? It seems he knows not what the letter contains! [*Aside.*

Moody. Come, ne'er wonder at it so much.

Belv. Faith, I can't help it.

Moody. Now, I think, I have deserv'd your infinite friendship and kindness, and have shew'd myself sufficiently an obliging kind friend and husband—am I not so, to bring a letter from my wife to her gallant?

Belv. Ay, indeed, you are the most obliging kind friend and husband in the world; ha, ha, ha! Pray, however, present my humble service to her, and tell her, I will obey her letter to a tittle, and fulfil her desires, be what they will, or with what difficulty soever I do't; and you shall be no more jealous of me, I warrant her, and you.

Moody. Well then, fare you well, and play with any man's honour but mine, kiss any man's wife but

mine, and welcome—so, Mr. Modesty, your servant. [*As* Moody *is going out he is met by* Sparkish.

Spark. So, brother-in-law, that was to have been, I have follow'd you from home to Belville's: I have strange news for you.

Moody. What, are you wiser than you were this morning?

Spark. Faith, I don't know but I am, for I have lost your sister, and I shan't eat half an ounce the less at dinner for it; there's philosophy for you.

Moody. Insensibility, you mean—I hope you don't mean to use my sister ill, sir?

Spark. No, sir, she has used me ill; she's in her tantrums—I have had a narrow escape, sir.

Moody. If thou art endow'd with the smallest portion of understanding, explain this riddle.

Belv. Ay, ay, pr'ythee, Sparkish, condescend to be intelligible.

Spark. Why, you must know, we had settled to be married—it is the same thing to me, whether I am married or not—I have no particular fancy one way or another, and so I told your sister; off or on, 'tis the same thing to me; but the thing was fix'd, you know—You and my aunt brought it about—I had no hand in it. And, to shew you that I was as willing to marry your sister as any other woman, I suffered the law to tye me up to hard terms, and the church would have finish'd me still to harder—but she was taken with her tantrums!

Moody. Damn your tantrums—come to the point.

Spark. Your sister took an aversion to the parson, Frank Harcourt's brother—abused him like a pick-pocket, and swore 'twas Harcourt himself.

Moody. And so it was, for I saw him.

Spark. Why, you are as mad as your sister—I tell you it was Ned, Frank's twin brother.

Moody. What, Frank told you so?

Spark. Ay, and Ned too——they were both in a story.

Moody. What an incorrigible fellow!——Come, come, I must be gone.

Spark. Nay, nay, you shall hear my story out.—— She walk'd up within pistol-shot of the church—then twirl'd round upon her heel—call'd me every name she could think of; and when she had exhausted her imagination, and tired her tongue—no easy matter, let me tell you—she call'd her chair, sent her foot-man to buy a monkey before my face, then bid me good-morrow with a sneer, and left us with our mouths open in the middle of a hundred people, who were all laughing at us! If these are not tantrums, I don't know what are.

Moody. Ha, ha, ha! I thank thee, Sparkish, from my soul; 'tis a most exquisite story; I have not had such a laugh for this half year—Thou art a most ridi-culous puppy, and I am infinitely obliged to thee; ha, ha, ha! [*Exit* Moody.

Spark. Did you ever hear the like, Belville?

Belv. O yes; how is it possible to hear such a fool-

ish story, and see thy foolish face, and not laugh at 'em; ha, ha, ha!

LUCY *in the closet laughs.*

Spark. Hey-day! what's that? What, have you raised a devil in the closet, to make up a laughing chorus at me? I must take a peep——— [*Going to the closet.*

Belv. Indeed but you must not.

Spark. 'Twas a woman's voice.

Belv. So much the better for me.

Spark. Pr'ythee, introduce me.

Belv. Though you take a pleasure in exposing your ladies, I choose to conceal mine. So, my dear Sparkish, lest the lady should be sick by too long a confinement, and laughing heartily at you—I must entreat you to withdraw—Pr'ythee, excuse me, I must laugh—ha, ha, ha, ha!

Spark. Do you know that I begin to be angry, Belville?

Belv. I can't help that; ha, ha, ha!

Spark. My character's at stake—I shall be thought a damn'd silly fellow—I will call Alithea to an account directly. [*Exit.*

Belv. Ha, ha, ha!

LUCY *peeping out.*

Lucy. Ha, ha, ha! O dear sir, let me have my laugh out, or I shall burst—What an adventure! [*Laughs.*

Belv. My sweet Peggy has sent me the kindest letter—and by the dragon himself—There's a spirit for you!

Lucy. There's simplicity for you! Shew me a town-bred girl with half the genius—Send you a love-letter, and by a jealous guardian too! ha, ha, ha! 'Tis too much—too much——Ha, ha, ha!——Well, Mr. Belville—the world goes as it should do—my mistress will exchange her fool for a wit, Miss Peggy her brute for a pretty young fellow; I shall dance at two weddings—be well rewarded by both parties—get a husband myself, and be as happy as the best of you—and so your humble servant. [*Exit.*

Belv. Success attend you, Lucy—— [*Exit.*

ACT V. SCENE I.

MOODY'S *house.* PEGGY *alone, leaning on her elbow. A table, pen, ink, and paper.*

Peggy.

WELL, 'tis e'en so, I have got the London disease they call love; I am sick of my guardian, and dying for Mr. Belville! I have heard this distemper call'd a fever, but methinks it is like an ague; for, when I think of my guardian, I tremble, and am in a cold sweat; but when I think of my gallant, dear Mr. Belville, my hot fit comes, and I am all in a fever indeed: my own chamber is tedious to me, and I would

fain be removed to his, and then methinks I should be very well. Ah! poor Mr. Belville! Well, I cannot, will not stay here; therefore I'll make an end of my letter to him, which shall be a finer letter than my last, because I have studied it like any thing. Oh! sick, sick!

Enter MOODY, *who, seeing her writing, steals softly behind her, and looking over her shoulder, snatches the paper from her.*

Moody. What, writing more letters?

Peg. O Lord! Bud, why d'ye fright me so?

[*She offers to run out, he stops her and reads.*

Moody. How's this! nay, you shall not stir, madam. *Dear, dear, dear Mr. Belville,*—very well, I have taught you to write letters to good purpose—but let's see't.—[*Reads.*]—*First, I am to beg your pardon for my boldness in writing to you, which I'd have you to know I would not have done, had you not said first you loved me so extremely; which, if you do, you will never suffer me to be another man's, who I loathe, nauseate, and detest:* (now you can write these filthy words,) But what follows?—*therefore, I hope you will speedily find some way to free me from this unfortunate match, which was never, I assure you, of my choice, but I'm afraid 'tis already too far gone; however, if you love me, as I do you, you will try what you can do; you must help me away before to-morrow, or else, alas! I shall be for ever out of your reach, for I can defer no longer our*—our—(what is to follow our—speak what) our journey into

the country, I suppose.——Oh, woman, damn'd woman! and love, damn'd love! their old tempter; for this is one of his miracles: in a moment he can make those blind that could see, and those see that were blind; those dumb that could speak, and those prattle that were dumb before.———But make an end of your letter, and then I'll make an end of you thus, and all my plagues together.

[*Draws his sword.*

Peg. O Lord! O Lord! you are such a passionate man, Bud!

Moody. Come, take the pen, and make an end of the letter, just as you intended; if you are false in a tittle, I shall soon perceive it, and punish you with this, as you deserve. [*Lays his hand on his sword.*] Write what was to follow—let's see——(*You must make haste and help me away before to-morrow, or else I shall be for ever out of your reach, for I can defer no longer our*, what follows our?———

[Peggy *takes the pen and writes.*

Peg. Must all out then, Bud?——Look you there theh.

Moody. Let's see——(*for I can defer no longer our wedding*———*Your slighted* Alithea.) What's the meaning of this, my sister's name to't? speak, unriddle.

Peg. Yes, indeed, Bud.

Moody. But why her name to't? speak——speak, I say.

Peg. Ay, but you'll tell her again: if you would not tell her again——

Moody. I will not; I am stunn'd, my head turns round. Speak.

Peg. Won't you tell her indeed, and indeed?

Moody. No; speak, I say.

Peg. She'll be angry with me; but I had rather she should be angry with me than you, Bud. And to tell you the truth, 'twas she made me write the letter, and taught me what I should write.

Moody. Ha!—I thought the style was somewhat better than her own. [*Aside.*] Could she come to you to teach you, since I had lock'd you up alone?

Peg. Oh, thro' the key-hole, Bud.

Moody. But why should she make you write a letter for her to him, since she can write herself?

Peg. Why, she said because——for I was unwilling to do it.

Moody. Because, what——because——

Peg. Because, lest Mr. Belville, as he was so young, should be inconstant, and refuse her, or be vain afterwards, and shew the letter, she might disown it, the hand not being hers.

Moody. Belville again!——Am I to be deceived again with that young hypocrite?

Peg. You have deceived yourself, Bud, you have indeed——I have kept the secret for my sister's sake, as long as I could——but you must know it——and shall know it too. [*Cries.*

Moody. Dry your eyes.

Peg. You always thought he was hankering after me—Good law! he's dying for Alithea, and Alithea for him—they have had private meetings—and he was making love to her before yesterday, from the tavern-window, when you thought it was me——I would have discovered all—but she made me swear to deceive you, and so I have finely—have not I, Bud?

Moody. Why did you write that foolish letter to him then, and make me more foolish to carry it?

Peg. To carry on the joke, Bud—to oblige them.

Moody. And will nothing serve her but that great baby?—he's too young for her to marry.

Peg. Why do you marry me then? 'tis the same thing, Bud.

Moody. No, no, 'tis quite different—How innocent she is!—This changeling could not invent this lye; but if she could, why should she? She might think I should soon discover it. [*Aside.*]—But hark you, madam, your sister went out in the morning, and I have not seen her within since.

Peg. Alack-a-day, she has been crying all day above, it seems, in a corner.

Moody. Where is she? let me speak with her.

Peg. O Lord! then she'll discover all.—[*Aside.*] Pray hold, Bud; what, d'ye mean to discover me! she'll know I have told you then. Pray, Bud, let me talk with her first.

Moody. I must speak with her, to know whether Belville ever made her any promise, and whether she will be married to Sparkish or no.

Peg. Pray, dear Bud, don't, till I have spoken with her, and told her that I have told you all; for she'll kill me else.

Moody. Go then, and bid her come to me.

Peg. Yes, yes, Bud.

Moody. Let me see——

Peg. I have just got time to know of Lucy, who first set me to work, what lie I shall tell next; for I am e'en at my wits end. [*Aside and Exit.*

Moody. Well, I resolve it, Belville shall have her: I'd rather give him my sister, than lend him my wife; and such an alliance will prevent his pretensions to my wife, sure—I'll make him of kin to her, and then he won't care for her.

Enter PEGGY.

Peg. O Lord, Bud, I told you what anger you wou'd make me with my sister.

Moody. Won't she come hither?

Peg. No, no, she's asham'd to look you in the face; she'll go directly to Mr. Belville, she says——She must speak with him, before she discovers all to you——or even sees you. She says too, that you shall know the reason by-and-by. Pray let her have her way, Bud—she won't be pacified if you don't—and will never forgive me——For my part, Bud, I believe, but don't tell any body, they have broken a piece of silver between 'em,—or have contracted one another, as we have done, you know, which is the next thing to being married.

Moody. Pooh! you fool——she ashamed of talking with me about Belville, because I made the match for her with Sparkish! But Sparkish is a fool, and I have no objection to Belville's family or fortune——tell her so.

Peg. I will, Bud. [*Going.*

Moody. Stay, stay, Peggy—let her have her own way—she shall go to Belville herself, and I'll follow her——that will be best——let her have her whim.

Peg. You're in the right, Bud——for they have certainly had a quarrel, by her crying and hanging her head so—I'll be hang'd if her eyes an't swell'd out of her head, she's in such a piteous taking.

Moody. Belville shan't use her ill, I'll take care of that—if he has made her a promise, he shall keep to it—but she had better go first—I will follow her at a distance, that she may have no interruption: and I will wait in the park before I see them, that they may come to a reconciliation before I come upon 'em.

Peg. Law, Bud, how wise you are! I wish I had half your wisdom; you see every thing at once——Stand a one side then, and I'll tell her you are gone to your room, and when she passes by, you may follow her.

Moody. And so I will—she shan't see me till I break in upon her at Belville's.

Peg. Now for it. [*Exit* Peggy.

Moody. My case is something better—for suppose

the worst—should Belville use her ill—I had rather fight him for not marrying my sister, than for debauching my wife, for I will make her mine absolutely to-morrow; and of the two I had rather find my sister too forward than my wife: I expected no other from her free education, as she calls it, and her passion for the town. Well, wife and sister are names which makes us expect love and duty, pleasure and comfort; but we find 'em plagues and torments, and are equally, tho' differently, troublesome to their keeper. But here she comes. [*Steps on one side.*

Enter PEGGY, *dress'd like* ALITHEA; *and as she passes over the stage, seems to sigh, sob, and wipe her eyes.*

Peg. Heigho! [*Exit.*

Moody. [*Comes forward.*] There the poor devil goes, sighing and sobbing; a woeful example of the fatal consequences of a town education—but I am bound in duty, as well as inclination, to do my utmost to save her—but first I'll secure my own property. [*Opens the door and calls.*]—Peggy! Peggy!—my dear!—I will return as soon as possible—Do you hear me? Why don't you answer? You may read in the book I bought you 'till I come back—As the Jew says, in the play, Fast bind, fast find. [*Locks the door.*] This is the best, and only security for female affections. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

The park, before BELVILLE'S *door. Enter* SPARKISH, *fuddled.*

Spark. If I can but meet with her, or any body that belongs to her, they will find me a match for 'em —When a man has wit and a great deal of it—Champagne gives it a double edge, and nothing can withstand it—'tis a lighted match to gunpowder—the mine is sprung, and the poor devils are toss'd heels uppermost in an instant. I was right to consult my friends, and they all agree with Moody, that I make a damn'd ridiculous figure, as matters stand at present. I'll consult Belville—this is his house—he's my friend too —and no fool. It shall be so—damn it, I must not be ridiculous. [*Going to the door, sees* Peggy *coming.*] Hold! hold! if the Champagne does not hurt my eyesight, while it sharpens my wit, the enemy is marching up this way—Come on, madam Alithea; now for a smart fire, and then let's see who will be ridiculous.

Enter PEGGY.

Peg. Dear me, I begin to tremble—there is Mr. Sparkish, and I can't get to Mr. Belville's house without passing by him—he sees me—and will discover me—he seems in liquor too!—bless me!

Spark. Oho! she stands at bay a little—she don't

much relish the engagement. The first blow is half the battle. I'll be a little figurative with her. [*Approaching her.*] I find, madam, you like a solo better than a duet. You need not have been walking alone this evening, if you had been wiser yesterday—What, nothing to say for yourself? Repentance, I suppose makes you as aukward and as foolish, as the poor country girl your brother has lock'd up in Pall-Mall.

Peg. I'm frighten'd out of my wits.

[*Tries to pass by him.*

Spark. Not a step farther shall you go, 'till you give me an account of your behaviour, and make me reparation for being ridiculous. What, dumb still—then, if you won't by fair means, I must squeeze you to a confession. [*As he goes to seize her, she slips by him; but he catches hold of her before she reaches* Belville's *door.*] Not quite so fast, if you please. Come, come, let me see your modest face, and hear your soft tongue—or I shall be tempted to use you ill.

Enter MOODY.

Moody. Hands off, you ruffian—how dare you use a lady, and my sister, in this manner?

[Moody *takes her from* Sparkish.

Spark. She's my property, sir—transferred to me by you—and tho' I would give her up to any body for a dirty sword-knot, yet I won't be bullied out of my right, tho' it is not worth that———

[*Snaps his fingers.*

Moody. There's a fellow to be a husband——you

are justified in despising him, and flying from him —I'll defend you with my purse and my sword—— knock at the door, and let me speak to Belville.—— [Peggy *knocks at the door, when the Footman opens it, she runs in.*]—Is your master at home, friend?

Foot. Yes, sir.

Moody. Tell him then that I have rescued that lady from this gentleman, and that by her desire, and my consent, she flies to him for protection; if he can get a parson, let him marry her this minute; tell him so, and shut the door. [*Exit Footman.*]—And now, sir, if your wine has given you courage, you had better shew it upon this occasion, for you are still damn'd ridiculous.

Spark. Did you ever hear the like!——Look ye, Mr. Moody, we are in the park, and to draw a sword is an offence to the court—so you may vapour as long as you please. A woman of so little taste is not worth fighting for—she's not worth my sword! but if you'll fight me to-morrow morning for diversion, I am your man.

Moody. Relinquish your title in the lady to Belville peaceably, and you may sleep in a whole skin.

Spark. Belville! he would not have your sister with the fortune of a nabob; no, no, his mouth waters at your country tid-bit at home—much good may do him.

Moody. And, you think so, puppy—ha, ha, ha!

Spark. Yes, I do, mastiff—ha, ha, ha!

Moody. Then thy folly is complete—ha, ha, ha!

Spark. Thine will be so, when thou hast married thy country innocence—ha, ha, ha!

[*They laugh at each other.*

Enter HARCOURT.

Moody. Who have we here?

Spark. What, my boy Harcourt!

Moody. What brings you here, sir?

Harc. I follow'd you to Belville's to present a near relation of yours, and a nearer one of mine, to you. [*Exit.*

Spark. What's the matter now?

Re-enter HARCOURT *with* ALITHEA.

Harc. Give me leave, gentlemen, without offence to either, to present Mrs. Harcourt to you!

Spark. Alithea! your wife!——Mr. Moody, are you in the clouds too?

Moody. If I am not in a dream—I am the most miserable waking dog, that ever run mad with his misfortunes and astonishment!

Harc. Why so, Jack—can you object to my happiness, when this gentleman was unworthy of it?

[Moody *walks about in a rage.*

Spark. This is very fine, very fine indeed—where's your story about Belville now, squire Moody? Prythee don't chafe and stare, and stride, and beat thy head, like a mad tragedy poet—but out with thy tropes and figures.

Moody. Zounds! I can't bear it.

[*Goes hastily to* Belville's *door, and knocks hard.*

Alith. Dear brother, what's the matter!

Moody. The devil's the matter! the devil and woman together. [*Knocks again.*] I'll break the door down if they won't answer. [*Knocks again.*

Footman appears in the balcony.

Foot. What would your honour please to have?

Moody. Your master, rascal!

Foot. He is obeying your commands, sir, and the moment he has finished, he will do himself the pleasure to wait on you.

Moody. You sneering villain you—if your master does not produce that she devil, who is now with him, and who, with a face of innocence, has cheated and undone me, I'll set fire to his house. [*Exit Foot.*

Spark. Gad so! now I begin to smoke the business. Well said, simplicity, rural simplicity! Egad! if thou hast trick'd Cerberus here, I shall be so ravish'd, that I will give this couple a wedding dinner. Pray, Mr. Moody, who's damn'd ridiculous now?

Moody. [*Going to* Sparkish.] Look ye, sir—don't grin, for if you dare to shew your teeth at my misfortunes, I'll dash 'em down your impudent throat, you jackanapes.

Spark. [*quite calm.*] Very fine, faith—but I have no weapons to butt with a mad bull, so you may toss and roar by yourself, if you please.

BELVILLE *appears in the balcony.*

Belv. What does my good friend want with me?

Moody. Are you a villain, or are you not?

Belv. I have obey'd your commands, sir.

Moody. What have you done with the girl, sir?

Belv. Made her my wife, as you desired.

Spark. Very true, I am your witness——

Moody. She's my wife, and I demand her.

PEGGY *appears in the balcony.*

Peg. No, but I an't——What's the matter, Bud, are you angry with me?

Moody. How dare you look me in the face, cockatrice?

Peg. How dare you look me in the face, Bud? Have you not given me to another, when you ought to have married me yourself? Have not you pretended to be married to me, when you knew in your conscience you was not?—And have not you been shilly-shally for a long time? So that if I had not married dear Mr. Belville, I should not have married at all—so I should not.

[Belville *and* Peggy *retire from the balcony.*

Spark. Extremely pleasant, faith; ha, ha, ha!

Moody. I am stupified with shame, rage, and astonishment—my fate has o'ercome me—I can struggle no more with it. [*Sighs.*] What is left me?—I cannot bear to look, or be look'd upon——I will hurry down to my old house, take a twelvemonth's provi-

sion into it—cut down my draw-bridge, run wild about my garden, which shall grow as wild as myself ——then will I curse the world, and every individual in it—and when my rage and spirits fail me, I will be found dead among the nettles and thistles; a woeful example of the baseness and treachery of one sex, and of the falsehood, lying, perjury, deceit, impudence, and—damnation of the other. [*Exit.*

Spark. Very droll, and extravagantly comic, I must confess; ha, ha, ha! [*Enter* Belville *and* Peggy.] Look ye, Belville, I wish you joy, with all my heart —you have got the prize, and perhaps have caught a tartar—that's no business of mine———If you want evidence for Mr. Moody's giving his consent to your marriage, I shall be ready. I bear no ill-will to that pair, I wish you happy. [*To* Alithea *and* Harcourt.] —tho' I'm sure they'll be miserable—and so your humble servant. [*Exit.*

Peg. I hope you forgive me, Alithea, for playing your brother this trick; indeed I should have only made him and myself miserable, had we married together.

Alith. Then 'tis much better as it is—But I am yet in the dark how this matter has been brought about: how your innocence, my dear, has outwitted his worldly wisdom.

Peg. I am sure I'll do any thing to please my Bud, but marry him.

EPILOGUE.

SPOKEN BY PEGGY.

BUT you, good gentry, what say you to this?
You are to judge me—have I done amiss?
I've reasons will convince you all, and strong ones;
Except old folks, who hanker after young ones:
Bud was so passionate, and grown so thrifty,
'Twas a sad life;——and then, he was near fifty!
I'm but nineteen—my husband too is young,
So soft, so gentle, such a winning tongue!
Have I, pray ladies, speak, done very wrong?
As for poor Bud, 'twas honest to deceive him!
More virtuous sure, to cheat him, than to grieve him.
Great folks, I know, will call me simple slut,
Marry for love! they cry, the country Put!
Marriage with them's a fashion—soon grows cool:
But I'm for loving always, like a fool.
With half my fortune I would rather part,
Than be all finery, with an aching heart:
For these strange awkward notions don't abuse me,
And, as I know no better, pray excuse me.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

THE END.

MR. PALMER as TOM.

I would not be a bit wiser, a bit richer, a bit taller, a bit shorter than I am at this Instant.

London Printed for J. Bell British Library, Strand 10 Sept. 1791.

THE

CONSCIOUS LOVERS.

THIS play is a very finished production in sentiment and language. If nothing more be needed than a sensible display of virtue to make men happy, good, and wise, we know no comedy that more merits to be at all times popular.

Yet an admirer of the old comedy rises fatigued from this piece as from a tedious lesson. It is as fine as Seneca, as profitable too, but weak humanity requires to be diverted into a sense of duty, and for risibility here is no food.

Perhaps, morally speaking, it is dangerous also to hold up for distinguished admiration the performance of *mere* duty. It weakens the influence of goodness, to tell mankind it is so rare among them.

PROLOGUE.

To win your hearts and to secure your praise
The comic writers strive by various ways,
By subtile stratagems they act their game,
And leave untry'd no avenue to fame;
One writes the spouse a beating from his wife,
And says each stroke was copy'd from the life;
Some fix all wit and humour in grimace,
And make a livelihood of Pinkey's face;
Here one gay sheer and costly habit tries,
Confiding to the judgment of your eyes;
Another smuts his scene, (a cunning shaver)
Sure of the rakes' and of the wenches' favour.
Oft' have these arts prevail'd, and one may guess
If practis'd o'er again would find success;
But the bold sage, the poet of to-night,
By new and desp'rate rules resolv'd to write,
Fain would he give more just applauses rise,
And please by wit that scorns the aids of vice;
The praise he seeks from worthier motives springs,
Such praise as praise to those that give it brings.

Your aid most humbly sought then Britons lend,
And lib'ral mirth like lib'ral men defend;
No more let ribaldry, with licence writ,
Usurp the name of eloquence or wit,

No more let lawless farce uncensur'd go,
The lewd dull gleanings of a Smithfield show;
'Tis yours with breeding to refine the age,
To chasten wit and moralize the stage.

Ye modest, wise, and good, ye Fair! ye Brave!
To-night the champion of your virtues save,
Redeem from long contempt the comic name,
And judge politely for your country's fame.

Dramatis Personæ.

COVENT-GARDEN.

	Men.
Sir JOHN BEVIL	Mr. Hull.
Mr. SEALAND	Mr. Aickin.
BEVIL, jun. *in love with* Indiana	Mr. Holman.
MYRTLE, *in love with* Lucinda	Mr. Farren.
CIMBERTON, *a coxcomb*	Mr. Quick.
HUMPHREY, *an old servant to Sir* John	Mr. Thompson.
TOM, *servant to* Bevil, jun.	Mr. Lewis.
DANIEL, *a country boy, servant to* Indiana	Mr. Blanchard.

	Women.
Mrs. SEALAND, *second wife to* Sealand	Mrs. Webb.
ISABELLA, *sister to* Sealand	Mrs. Platt.
INDIANA, Sealand's *daughter by his first wife*	Mrs. Esten.
LUCINDA, Sealand's *daughter by his second wife*	Mrs. Mountain.
PHILLIS, *maid to* Lucinda	Mrs. Mattocks.

SCENE, London.

THE CONSCIOUS LOVERS.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Sir JOHN BEVIL'S *House. Enter Sir* JOHN BEVIL *and* HUMPHREY.

Sir John Bevil.

HAVE you order'd that I should not be interrupted while I am dressing?

Humph. Yes, sir; I believ'd you had something of moment to say to me.

" *Sir J. B.* Let me see, Humphrey; I think it is " now full forty years, since I first took thee to be " about myself.

" *Humph.* I think, sir, it has been an easy forty " years, and I have pass'd 'em without much sick- " ness, care, or labour.

" *Sir J. B.* Thou hast a brave constitution: you " are a year or two older than I am, sirrah.

" *Humph.* You have ever been of that mind, sir.

"*Sir J. B.* You knave, you know it; I took thee "for thy gravity and sobriety in my wild years.

"*Humph.* Ah, sir! our manners were form'd from "our different fortunes, not our different ages; "wealth gave a loose to your youth, and poverty put "a restraint upon mine.

"*Sir J. B.* Well, Humphrey, you know I have "been a kind master to you; I have us'd you, for "the ingenuous nature I observed in you from the "beginning, more like an humble friend than a ser-"vant.

"*Humph.* I humbly beg you'll be so tender of me "as to explain your commands, sir, without any "farther preparation."

Sir J. B. I'll tell thee, then. In the first place, this wedding of my son's in all probability (shut the door) will never be at all.

Humph. How, sir, not be at all! for what reason is it carried on in appearance?

Sir J. B. Honest Humphrey, have patience, and I'll tell thee all in order. I have myself in some part of my life lived indeed with freedom, but I hope without reproach: now I thought liberty would be as little injurious to my son, therefore as soon as he grew towards man I indulg'd him in living after his own manner. I know not how otherwise to judge of his inclination; for what can be concluded from a behaviour under restraint and fear? But what charms me above all expression is, that my son has never in the least action, the most distant hint or word, va-

lued himself upon that great estate of his mother's, which, according to our marriage-settlement, he has had ever since he came to age.

Humph. No, sir; on the contrary, he seems afraid of appearing to enjoy it before you or any belonging to you.—He is as dependent and resign'd to your will as if he had not a farthing but what must come from your immediate bounty.—You have ever acted like a good and generous father, and he like an obedient and grateful son.

Sir J. B. "Nay, his carriage is so easy to all with "whom he converses that he is never assuming, never "prefers himself to others, nor is ever guilty of that "rough sincerity which a man is not called to, and "certainly disobliges most of his acquaintance." To be short, Humphrey, his reputation was so fair in the world, that old Sealand, the great India merchant, has offer'd his only daughter, and sole heiress to that vast estate of his, as a wife for him. You may be sure I made no difficulties; the match was agreed on, and this very day named for the wedding.

Humph. What hinders the proceeding?

Sir J. B. Don't interrupt me. You know I was, last Thursday, at the masquerade; my son, you may remember, soon found us out——he knew his grandfather's habit, which I then wore; and though it was in the mode in the last age, yet the maskers, you know, follow'd us as if we had been the most monstrous figures in that whole assembly.

Humph. I remember, indeed, a young man of qua-

lity in the habit of a clown that was particularly troublesome.

Sir J. B. Right—he was too much what he seem'd to be. You remember how impertinently he follow'd and teased us, and wou'd know who we were.

Humph. I know he has a mind to come into that particular. [*Aside.*

Sir J. B. Ay, he followed us till the gentleman who led the lady in the Indian mantle presented that gay creature to the rustic, and bid him (like Cymon in the fable) grow polite, by falling in love, and let that worthy old gentleman alone, meaning me. The clown was not reform'd, but rudely persisted, and offered to force off my mask; with that the gentleman throwing off his own, appeared to be my son, and in his concern for me tore off that of the nobleman: at this they seized each other, the company called the guards, and in the surprise the lady swoon'd away; upon which my son quitted his adversary, and had now no care but of the lady—— when raising her in his arms, "Art thou gone," cry'd he, "for ever——forbid it, Heav'n!"—She revives at his known voice—and with the most familiar, though modest gesture, hangs in safety over his shoulders weeping, but wept as in the arms of one before whom she could give herself a loose, were she not under observation: while she hides her face in his neck, he carefully conveys her from the company.

Humph. I have observed this accident has dwelt upon you very strongly.

Sir J. B. Her uncommon air, her noble modesty, the dignity of her person, and the occasion itself, drew the whole assembly together; and I soon heard it buzz'd about she was the adopted daughter of a famous sea-officer who had serv'd in France. Now this unexpected and public discovery of my son's so deep concern for her———

Humph. Was what, I suppose, alarm'd Mr. Sealand, in behalf of his daughter, to break off the match.

Sir J. B. You are right—he came to me yesterday, and said he thought himself disengaged from the bargain, being credibly informed my son was already marry'd, or worse, to the lady at the masquerade. I palliated matters, and insisted on our agreement; but we parted with little less than a direct breach between us.

Humph. Well, sir, and what notice have you taken of all this to my young master?

Sir J. B. That's what I wanted to debate with you—I have said nothing to him yet—But look ye, Humphrey, if there is so much in this amour of his that he denies upon my summons to marry, I have cause enough to be offended; and then, by my insisting upon his marrying to-day, I shall know how far he is engag'd to this lady in masquerade, and from thence only shall be able to take my measures; in the mean time, I would have you find out how far

that rogue his man is let into his secret—he, I know, will play tricks as much to cross me as to serve his master.

Humph. Why do you think so of him, sir? I believe he is no worse than I was for you at your son's age.

Sir J. B. I see it in the rascal's looks. But I have dwelt on these things too long: I'll go to my son immediately, and while I'm gone, your part is to convince his rogue, Tom, that I am in earnest. I'll leave him to you. [*Exit.*

Humph. Well, tho' this father and son live as well together as possible, yet their fear of giving each other pain is attended with constant mutual uneasiness! I am sure I have enough to do to be honest, and yet keep well with them both; but they know I love 'em, and that makes the task less painful however.—Oh, here's the prince of poor coxcombs, the representative of all the better fed than taught!—Ho, ho, Tom! whither so gay and so airy this morning?

Enter TOM *singing.*

Tom. Sir, we servants of single gentlemen are another kind of people than you domestic ordinary drudges that do business; we are rais'd above you: the pleasures of board-wages, tavern-dinners, and many a clear gain, vails, alas! you never heard or dreamt of.

Humph. Thou hast follies and vices enough for a man of ten thousand a-year, tho' it is but as t'other

day that I sent for you to town to put you into Mr. Sealand's family, that you might learn a little before I put you to my young master, who is too gentle for training such a rude thing as you were into proper obedience.——You then pull'd off your hat to every one you met in the street, like a bashful, great, awkward cub as you were. But your great oaken cudgel, when you were a booby, became you much better than that dangling stick at your button, now you are a fop, that's fit for nothing except it hangs there to be ready for your master's hand when you are impertinent.

Tom. Uncle Humphrey, you know my master scorns to strike his servants; you talk as if the world was now just as it was when my old master and you were in your youth——when you went to dinner because it was so much a clock, when the great blow was given in the hall at the pantry door, and all the family came out of their holes in such strange dresses and formal faces as you see in the pictures in our long gallery in the country.

Humph. Why, you wild rogue!

Tom. You could not fall to your dinner till a formal fellow in a black gown said something over the meat, as if the cook had not made it ready enough.

Humph. Sirrah, who do you prate after?—despising men of sacred characters! I hope you never heard my young master talk so like a profligate.

Tom. Sir, I say you put upon me when I first came to town about being orderly, and the doctrine of

wearing shams to make linen last clean a fortnight, keeping my clothes fresh, and wearing a frock within doors.

Humph. Sirrah, I gave you those lessons because I supposed at that time your master and you might have din'd at home every day, and cost you nothing; then you might have made you a good family servant; but the gang you have frequented since at chocolate-houses and taverns, in a continual round of noise and extravagance——

Tom. I don't know what you heavy inmates call noise and extravagance; but we gentlemen who are well fed, and cut a figure, sir, think it a fine life, and that we must be very pretty fellows who are kept only to be looked at.

Humph. Very well, sir—I hope the fashion of being lewd and extravagant, despising of decency and order, is almost at an end, since it is arrived at persons of your quality.

Tom. Master Humphrey, ha, ha! you were an unhappy lad to be sent up to town in such queer days as you were. Why now, sir, the lacquies are the men of pleasure of the age; the top gamesters, and many a lac'd coat about town, have had their education in our party-colour'd regiment.—We are false lovers, have a taste of music, poetry, billet-doux, dress, politics, ruin damsels; and when we are weary of this lewd town, and have a mind to take up, whip into our masters' wigs and linen, and marry fortunes.

Humph. Hey day!

Tom. Nay, sir, our order is carried up to the highest dignities and distinctions: step but into the Painted Chamber—and by our titles you'd take us all for men of quality—then again, come down to the Court of Requests, and you shall see us all laying our broken heads together, for the good of the nation; and tho' we never carry a question *nemine contradicente*, yet this I can say with a safe conscience, (and I wish every gentleman of our cloth could lay his hand upon his heart and say the same) that I never took so much as a single mug of beer for my vote in all my life.

Humph. Sirrah, there is no enduring your extravagance; I'll hear you prate no longer: I wanted to see you to inquire how things go with your master, as far as you understand them: I suppose he knows he is to be married to-day.

Tom. Ay, sir, he knows it, and is dress'd as gay as the sun; but, between you and I, my dear! he has a very heavy heart under all that gaiety. As soon as he was dress'd I retir'd, but overheard him sigh in the most heavy manner. He walk'd thoughtfully to and fro in the room, then went into his closet: when he came out he gave me this for his mistress, whose maid you know—

Humph. Is passionately fond of your fine person.

Tom. The poor fool is so tender, and loves to hear me talk of the world, and the plays, operas, and ridottoes for the winter, the Parks and Bellsize for our summer diversions; and lard! says she, you are so wild—but you have a world of humour.

Humph. Coxcomb! Well, but why don't you run with your master's letter to Mrs. Lucinda, as he order'd you?

Tom. Because Mrs. Lucinda is not so easily come at as you think for.

Humph. Not easily come at? why, sir, are not her father and my old master agreed that she and Mr. Bevil are to be one flesh before to-morrow morning?

Tom. It's no matter for that: her mother, it seems, Mrs. Sealand, has not agreed to it; and you must know, Mr. Humphrey, that in that family the grey mare is the better horse.

Humph. What dost thou mean?

Tom. In one word, Mrs. Sealand pretends to have a will of her own, and has provided a relation of hers, a stiff starch'd philosopher, and a wise fool, for her daughter; for which reason, for these ten days past, she has suffer'd no message nor letter from my master to come near her.

Humph. And where had you this intelligence?

Tom. From a foolish fond soul that can keep nothing from me——one that will deliver this letter too if she is rightly manag'd.

Humph. What, her pretty handmaid, Mrs. Phillis?

Tom. Even she, sir. This is the very hour, you know, she usually comes hither, under a pretence of a visit to our housekeeper forsooth, but in reality to have a glance at——

Humph. Your sweet face, I warrant you.

Tom. Nothing else in nature. You must know I love to fret and play with the little wanton———

Humph. Play with the little wanton! what will this world come to!

Tom. I met her this morning in a new manteau and petticoat not a bit the worse for her lady's wearing, and she has always new thoughts and new airs with new clothes——then she never fails to steal some glance or gesture from every visitant at their house, and is indeed the whole town of coquettes at second-hand.——But here she comes; in one motion she speaks and describes herself better than all the words in the world can.

Humph. Then I hope, dear sir! when your own affair is over, you will be so good as to mind your master's with her.

Tom. Dear Humphrey! you know my master is my friend, and those are people I never forget—

Humph. Sauciness itself! but I'll leave you to do your best for him. [*Exit.*

Enter PHILLIS.

Phil. Oh, Mr. Thomas, is Mrs. Sugarkey at home? —Lard! one is almost asham'd to pass along the streets. The town is quite empty, and nobody of fashion left in it; and the ordinary people do so stare to see any thing dress'd like a woman of condition, "as it were on the same floor with them," pass by. Alas! alas! it is a sad thing to walk. O fortune, fortune!

Tom. What! a sad thing to walk! why, Madam Phillis, do you wish yourself lame?

Phil. No, Mr. Thomas, but I wish I were generally carry'd in a coach or chair, and of a fortune neither to stand nor go, but to totter, or slide, to be short-sighted, or stare, to fleer in the face, to look distant, to observe, to overlook, yet all become me; and if I were rich, I could twire and loll as well as the best of them. Oh Tom, Tom! is it not a pity that you should be so great a coxcomb and I so great a coquette, and yet be such poor devils as we are?

Tom. Mrs. Phillis, I am your humble servant for that—

Phil. Yes, Mr. Thomas, I know how much you are my humble servant, and know what you said to Mrs. Judy upon seeing her in one of her lady's cast manteaus, that any one would have thought her the lady, and that she had ordered the other to wear it till it sat easy—for now only it was becoming—to my lady it was only a covering, to Mrs. Judy it was a habit. This you said after somebody or other. Oh Tom, Tom! thou art as false and as base as the best gentleman of them all: but, you wretch! talk to me no more on the old odious subject: don't, I say.

Tom. I know not how to resist your commands, madam. [*In a submissive tone, retiring.*

Phil. Commands about parting are grown mighty easy to you of late.

Tom. Oh, I have her! I have nettled and put her into the right temper to be wrought upon and set a

prating. [*Aside.*]—Why truly, to be plain with you, Mrs. Phillis, I can take little comfort of late in frequenting your house.

Phil. Pray, Mr. Thomas, what is it, all of a sudden, offends your nicety at our house?

Tom. I don't care to speak particulars, but I dislike the whole.

Phil. I thank you, sir; I am a part of that whole.

Tom. Mistake me not, good Phillis.

Phil. Good Phillis! saucy enough. But however—

Tom. I say it is that thou art a part which gives me pain for the disposition of the whole. You must know, madam, to be serious, I am a man at the bottom of prodigious nice honour. You are too much expos'd to company at your house. To be plain, I don't like so many that would be your mistress's lovers whispering to you.

Phil. Don't think to put that upon me. You say this because I wrung you to the heart when I touched your guilty conscience about Judy.

Tom. Ah, Phillis, Phillis! if you but knew my heart!

Phil. I know too much on't.

" *Tom.* Nay, then, poor Crispo's fate and mine are
" ——therefore give me leave to say, or sing at least,
" as he does upon the same occasion———

" *Se vedette, &c.* [*Sings.*]

" *Phil.* What, do you think I'm to be fobb'd off

"with a song?—I don't question but you have sung "the same to Mrs. Judy too."

Tom. Don't disparage your charms, good Phillis, with jealousy of so worthless an object; besides, she is a poor hussy; and if you doubt the sincerity of my love, you will allow me true to my interest. You are a fortune, Phillis——

Phil. What would the fop be at now? In good time, indeed, you shall be setting up for a fortune.

Tom. Dear Mrs. Phillis! you have such a spirit that we shall never be dull in marriage, when we come together. But I tell you, you are a fortune, and you have an estate in my hands.

[*He pulls out a purse, she eyes it.*

Phil. What pretence have I to what is in your hands, Mr. Thomas?

Tom. As thus: there are hours, you know, when a lady is neither pleased nor displeased, neither sick nor well, when she lolls or loiters, when she is without desires, from having more of every thing than she knows what to do with.

Phil. Well, what then?

Tom. When she has not life enough to keep her bright eyes quite open to look at her own dear image in the glass.

Phil Explain thyself, and don't be so fond of thy own prating.

Tom. There are also prosperous and good natur'd

moments, as when a knot or a patch is happily fix'd, when the complexion particularly flourishes.

Phil. Well, what then? I have not patience!

Tom. Why then—or on the like occasions—we servants, who have skill to know how to time business, see, when such a pretty folded thing as this is [*shews a letter*] may be presented, laid, or dropped, as best suits the present humour. And, madam, because it is a long wearisome journey to run through all the several stages of a lady's temper, my master, who is the most reasonable man in the world, presents you this to bear your charges on the road.

[*Gives her the purse.*

Phil. Now, you think me a cortupt hussy.

Tom. O fy! I only think you'll take the letter.

Phil. Nay, I know you do; but I know my own innocence: I take it for my mistress's sake.

Tom. I know it, my pretty one! I know it.

Phil. Yes, I say I do it because I would not have my mistress deluded by one who gives no proof of his passion: but I'll talk more of this as you see me on my way home.——No, Tom; I assure thee I take this trash of thy master's not for the value of the thing, but as it convinces me he has a true respect for my mistress. I remember a verse to the purpose:——

They may be false who languish and complain,
But they who part with money never feign.

[Exeunt.

SCENE II.

BEVIL, *Junior's, Lodgings.* BEVIL, *Junior, reading.*

B. jun. These moral writers practise virtue after death. This charming vision of Mirza! such an author consulted in a morning sets the spirits for the vicissitudes of the day better than the glass does a man's person. But what a day have I to go through! to put on an easy look with an aching heart!——If this lady, my father urges me to marry, should not refuse me, my dilemma is insupportable. But why should I fear it? Is not she in equal distress with me? Has not the letter I have sent her this morning confess'd my inclination to another? Nay, have I not moral assurances of her engagements too to my friend Myrtle? It's impossible but she must give in to it; for sure to be deny'd is a favour any man may pretend to. It must be so.——Well then, with the assurance of being rejected, I think I may confidently say to my father I am ready to marry her—then let me resolve upon (what I am not very good at) an honest dissimulation.

Enter TOM.

Tom. Sir John Bevil, sir, is in the next room.

B. jun. Dunce! why did you not bring him in?

Tom. I told him, sir, you were in your closet.

B. jun. I thought you had known, sir, it was my duty to see my father any where.

[*Going himself to the door.*

Tom. The devil's in my master! he has always more wit than I have. [*Aside.*

BEVIL, *Junior*, *introducing Sir* JOHN.

B. jun. Sir, you are the most gallant, the most complaisant, of all parents.—Sure 'tis not a compliment to say these lodgings are yours.—Why wou'd you not walk in, sir?

Sir J. B. I was loath to interrupt you unseasonably on your wedding-day.

B. jun. One to whom I am beholden for my birth-day might have used less ceremony.

Sir J. B. Well, son, I have intelligence you have writ to your mistress this morning. It would please my curiosity to know the contents of a wedding-day letter, for courtship must then be over.

B. jun. I assure you, sir, there was no insolence in it upon the prospect of such a vast fortune's being added to our family, but much acknowledgment of the lady's great desert.

Sir J. B. But, dear Jack, are you in earnest in all this? and will you really marry her?

B. jun. Did I ever disobey any command of yours, sir? nay, any inclination that I saw you bent upon?

"*Sir J. B.* Why, I cann't say you have, son: but "methinks in this whole business you have not been "so warm as I could have wished you; you have vi-

" sited her, it is true, but you have not been parti-
" cular.—Every one knows you can say and do as
" handsome things as any man; but you have done
" nothing but lived in the general, being complaisant
" only.

" *B. jun.* As I am ever prepared to marry if you
" bid me, so I am ready to let it alone if you will
" have me. [Humphrey *enters unobserv'd.*

" *Sir J. B.* Look you there now? Why, what am
" I to think of this so absolute and so indifferent a
" resignation?

" *B. jun.* Think that I am still your son, sir—sir
" —you have been married, and I have not; and you
" have, sir, found the inconvenience there is when a
" man weds with too much love in his head. I have
" been told, sir, that at the time you married you
" made a mighty bustle on the occasion—there was
" challenging and fighting, scaling walls—locking up
" the lady—and the gallant under an arrest for fear
" of killing all his rivals. Now, sir, I suppose you
" having found the ill consequence of those strong
" passions and prejudices in preference of one woman
" to another in case of a man's becoming a widower—

" *Sir J. B.* How is this?

" *B. jun.* I say, sir, experience has made you wiser
" in your care of me; for, sir, since you lost my dear
" mother, your time has been so heavy, so lonely,
" and so tasteless, that you are so good as to guard
" me against the like unhappiness, by marrying me
" prudentially by way of bargain and sale: for, as

" you well judge, a woman that is espoused for a " fortune is yet a better bargain if she dies; for then " a man well enjoys what he did marry, the money, " and is disencumbered of what he did not marry, " the woman.

" *Sir J. B.* But pray, sir, do you think Lucinda " then a woman of such little merit?

" *B. jun.* Pardon me, sir, I don't carry it so far " neither; I am rather afraid I shall like her too " well; she has, for one of her fortune, a great " many needless and superfluous good qualities.

" *Sir J. B.* I am afraid, son, there's something I " don't see yet, something that's smothered under " all this raillery.

B. jun. "Not in the least, sir."—If the lady is dress'd and ready, you see I am. I suppose the lawyers are ready too.

Enter HUMPHREY.

Humph. Sir, Mr. Sealand is at the coffee-house, and has sent to speak with you.

Sir J. B. Oh! that's well! then I warrant the lawyers are ready. Son, you'll be in the way you say——

B. jun. If you please, sir, I'll take a chair and go to Mr. Sealand's, where the young lady and I will wait your leisure.

Sir J. B. By no means—the old fellow will be so vain if he sees——

B. jun. Ay—but the young lady, sir, will think me so indifferent———

Humph. Ay—there you are right—press your readiness to go to the bride—he won't let you.

[*Aside to* Bev. *jun.*

B. jun. Are you sure of that? [*Aside to* Humph.

Humph. How he likes being prevented! [*Aside.*

Sir J. B. No, no; you are an hour or two too early. [*Looking on his watch.*

" *B. jun.* You'll allow me, sir, to think it too late " to visit a beautiful, virtuous, young woman, in the " pride and bloom of life, ready to give herself to " my arms, and to place her happiness or misery for " the future in being agreeable or displeasing to me, " is a—— Call a chair."

Sir J. B. " No, no, no, dear Jack!" Besides, this Sealand is a moody old fellow. There's no dealing with some people but by managing with indifference. We must leave to him the conduct of this day; it is the last of his commanding his daughter.

B. jun. Sir, he can't take it ill that I am impatient to be hers.

" *Sir J. B.* Pray let me govern in this matter. " You cann't tell how humorsome old fellows are. " —There's no offering reason to some of 'em, espe- " cially when they are rich.—If my son should see " him before I've brought Old Sealand into better " temper, the match would be impracticable. [*Aside.*

" *Humph.* Pray, sir, let me beg you to let Mr. Bevil " go.—See whether he will not. [*Aside to Sir* John.]

" —[*Then to* Bevil.] Pray, sir, command yourself; " since you see my master is positive, it is better you " should not go.

" *B. jun.* My father commands me as to the object " of my affections, but I hope he will not as to the " warmth and height of them.

Sir J. B. " So I must even leave things as I found " them, and in the mean-time at least keep old Sea- " land out of his sight."—Well, son, I'll go myself and take orders in your affair—You'll be in the way, I suppose, if I send to you—I'll leave your old friend with you——Humphrey—don't let him stir, d'ye hear. Your servant, your servant.

[*Exit Sir* John.

Humph. I have a sad time on't, sir, between you and my master—I see you are unwilling, and I know his violent inclinations for the match.—I must betray neither, and yet deceive you both, for your common good.——Heav'n grant a good end of this matter: but there is a lady, sir, that gives your father much trouble and sorrow—You'll pardon me.

B. jun. Humphrey, I know thou art a friend to both, and in that confidence I dare tell thee—That lady—is a woman of honour and virtue. You may assure yourself I never will marry without my father's consent; but give me leave to say too, this declaration does not come up to a promise that I will take whomsoever he pleases.

" *Humph.* Come, sir, I wholly understand you: " you would engage my services to free you from

" this woman whom my master intends you, to make
" way in time for the woman you have really a
" mind to.

" *B. jun.* Honest Humphrey! you have always
" been an useful friend to my father and myself; I
" beg you to continue your good offices, and don't let
" us come to the necessity of a dispute, for if we
" should dispute, I must either part with more than
" life, or lose the best of fathers."

Humph. My dear master! were I but worthy to know this secret that so near concerns you, my life, my all, should be engaged to serve you. This, sir, I dare promise, that I am sure I will and can be secret: your trust, at worst, but leaves you where you were; and if I cannot serve you, I will at once be plain and tell you so.

B. jun. That's all I ask. Thou hast made it now my interest to trust thee.——Be patient then, and hear the story of my heart.

Humph. I am all attention, sir.

B. jun. You may remember, Humphrey, that in my last travels my father grew uneasy at my making so long a stay at Toulon.

Humph. I remember it; he was apprehensive some woman had laid hold of you.

B. jun. His fears were just, for there I first saw this lady: she is of English birth: her father's name was Danvers, a younger brother of an ancient family, and originally an eminent merchant of Bristol, who, upon repeated misfortunes, was reduced to go

privately to the Indies. In this retreat, Providence again grew favourable to his industry, and in six years time restored him to his former fortunes. On this he sent directions over that his wife and little family should follow him to the Indies. His wife, impatient to obey such welcome orders, would not wait the leisure of a convoy, but took the first occasion of a single ship, and with her husband's sister only and this daughter, then scarce seven years old, undertook the fatal voyage: for here, poor creature, she lost her liberty and life: she and her family, with all they had, were unfortunately taken by a privateer from Toulon. Being thus made a prisoner, though, as such, not ill-treated, yet the fright, the shock, and the cruel disappointment, seized with such violence upon her unhealthy frame, she sickened, pined, and died at sea.

Humph. Poor soul! Oh, the helpless infant!

B. jun. Her sister yet survived, and had the care of her; the captain, too, proved to have humanity, and became a father to her; for having himself married an English woman, and being childless, he brought home into Toulon this her little countrywoman, this orphan I may call her, presenting her, with all her dead mother's moveables of value, to his wife, to be educated as his own adopted daughter.

Humph. Fortune here seemed again to smile on her.

B. jun. Only to make her frowns more terrible; for in his height of fortune this captain too, her be-

nefactor, unfortunately was killed at sea, and dying intestate, his estate fell wholly to an advocate, his brother, who coming soon to take possession, there found, among his other riches, this blooming virgin at his mercy.

Humph. He durst not sure abuse his power!

B. jun. No wonder if his pampered blood was fired at the sight of her.——In short, he loved; but when all arts and gentle means had failed to move, he offered too his menaces in vain, denouncing vengeance on her cruelty, demanding her to account for all her maintenance from her childhood, seized on her little fortune as his own inheritance, and was dragging her by violence to prison, when Providence at the instant interposed, and sent me by miracle to relieve her.

Humph. 'Twas Providence, indeed! But pray, sir, after all this trouble, how came this lady at last to England?

B. jun. The disappointed advocate, finding she had so unexpected a support, on cooler thoughts descended to a composition, which I, without her knowledge, secretly discharged.

Humph. That generous concealment made the obligation double.

B. jun. Having thus obtained her liberty, I prevailed, not without some difficulty, to see her safe to England, where we no sooner arrived, but my father, jealous of my being imprudently engaged, im-

mediately proposed this other fatal match that hangs upon my quiet.

Humph. I find, sir, you are irrecoverably fixed upon this lady.

B. jun. As my vital life dwells in my heart——and yet you see—what I do to please my father; walk in this pageantry of dress, this splendid covering of sorrow—But, Humphrey, you have your lesson.

Humph. Now, sir, I have but one material question—

B. jun. Ask it freely.

Humph. Is it then your own passion for this secret lady, or hers for you, that gives you this aversion to the match your father has proposed you?

B. jun. I shall appear, Humphrey, more romantic in my answer than in all the rest of my story; for though I dote on her to death, and have no little reason to believe she has the same thoughts for me, yet in all my acquaintance and utmost privacies with her I never once directly told her that I loved.

Humph. How was it possible to avoid it?

B. jun. My tender obligations to my father have laid so inviolable a restraint upon my conduct, that till I have his consent to speak, I am determined on that subject to be dumb for ever.——*An honourable retreat shall always be at least within my power, however Fortune may dispose of me; the lady may reject perhaps, but never shall reproach me.*

Humph. Well, sir, to your praise be it spoken, you

are certainly the most unfashionable lover in Great Britain.

Enter TOM.

Tom. Sir, Mr. Myrtle's at the next door, and if you are at leisure, will be glad to wait on you.

B. jun. Whene'er he pleases——Hold, Tom; did you receive no answer to my letter?

Tom. Sir, I was desired to call again; for I was told her mother would not let her be out of her sight; but about an hour hence Mrs. Phillis said I should have one.

B. jun. Very well.

Humph. Sir, I will take another opportunity; in the mean time I only think it proper to tell you, that, from a secret I know, you may appear to your father as forward as you please to marry Lucinda, without the least hazard of its coming to a conclusion.——Sir, your most obedient servant.

B. jun. Honest Humphrey! I continue but my friend in this exigence and you shall always find me yours. [*Exit* Humph.] I long to hear how my letter has succeeded with Lucinda. "But I think it cannot fail; "for at worst, were it possible she would take it ill, "her resentment of my indifference may as probably "occasion a delay as her taking it right."——Poor Myrtle! what terrors must he be in all this while!——Since he knows she is offered to me and refused to him, there is no conversing or taking any measures

with him for his own service.—But I ought to bear with my friend, and use him as one in adversity.

All his disquietudes by my own I prove,
For none exceeds *perplexity in love.* [Exeunt.

ACT II. SCENE X.

Continues. Enter BEVIL, *Jun. and* TOM.

Tom.

SIR, Mr. Myrtle.

B. jun. Very well.——Do you step again, and wait for an answer to my letter. [*Exit* Tom.

Enter MYRTLE.

Well, Charles, why so much care in thy countenance? is there any thing in this world deserves it? you who used to be so gay, so open, so vacant!

Myrt. I think we have of late chang'd complexions. You who us'd to be much the graver man are now all air in your behaviour.——But the cause of my concern may, for aught I know, be the same object that gives you all this satisfaction. In a word, I am told that you are this very day (and your dress confirms me in it) to be married to Lucinda.

B. jun. You are not misinformed.——Nay, put not on the terrors of a rival till you hear me out. I shall disoblige the best of fathers if I don't seem ready to

marry Lucinda; and you know I have ever told you you might make use of my secret resolution never to marry her for your own service as you please: but I am now driven to the extremity of immediately refusing or complying, unless you help me to escape the match.

Myrt. Escape, sir! neither her merit nor her fortune are below your acceptance. Escaping do you call it?

B. jun. Dear sir! do you wish I should desire the match?

Myrt. No——but such is my humorous and sickly state of mind, since it has been able to relish nothing but Lucinda, that tho' I must owe my happiness to your aversion to this marriage, I cann't bear to hear her spoken of with levity or unconcern.

B. jun. Pardon me, sir, I shall transgress that way no more. She has understanding, beauty, shape, complexion, wit——

Myrt. Nay, dear Belvil! don't speak of her as if you lov'd her neither.

B. jun. Why then, to give you ease at once, tho' I allow Lucinda to have good sense, wit, beauty, and virtue, I know another in whom these qualities appear to me more amiable than in her.

Myrt. There you spoke like a reasonable and good-natur'd friend. When you acknowledge her merit, and own your prepossession for another, at once you gratify my fondness and cure my jealousy.

B. jun. But all this while you take no notice, you

have no apprehension, of another man that has twice the fortune of either of us.

Myrt. Cimberton! Hang him, a formal, philosophical, pedantic coxcomb!——for the sot, with all these crude notions of divers things, under the direction of great vanity and very little judgment, shews his strongest bias is avarice, which is so predominant in him, that he will examine the limbs of his mistress with the caution of a jockey, and pays no more compliment to her personal charms than if she were a mere breeding animal.

B. jun. Are you sure that is not affected? I have known some women sooner set on fire by that sort of negligence, than by *all the blaze and ceremony of a court.*

Myrt. No, no; hang him! the rogue has no art; it is pure simple insolence and stupidity.

B. jun. Yet with all this I don't take him for a fool.

Myrt. I own the man is not a natural; he has a very quick sense, tho' a very slow understanding——he says indeed many things that want only the circumstances of time and place to be very just and agreeable.

B. jun. Well, you may be sure of me if you can disappoint him; but my intelligence says the mother has actually sent for the conveyancer to draw articles for his marriage with Lucinda, tho' those for mine with her are by her father's order ready for signing; but it seems she has not thought fit to consult either him or his daughter in the matter.

Myrt. Pshaw! a poor troublesome woman!—Neither Lucinda nor her father will ever be brought to comply with it—besides, I am sure Cimberton can make no settlement upon her without the concurrence of his great uncle, Sir Geoffry in the West.

B. jun. Well, sir, and I can tell you that's the very point that is now laid before her counsel, to know whether a firm settlement can be made without this uncle's actually joining in it.—Now, pray consider, sir, when my affair with Lucinda comes, as it soon must, to an open rupture, how are you sure that Cimberton's fortune may not then tempt her father too to hear his proposals?

Myrt. There you are right indeed; that must be provided against.—Do you know who are her counsel?

B. jun. Yes, for your service I have found out that too; they are Serjeant Bramble and old Target.—By the way, they are neither of 'em known in the family: now I was thinking why you might not put a couple of false counsels upon her, to delay and confound matters a little—besides, it may probably let you into the bottom of her whole design against you.

Myrt. As how, pray?

B. jun. Why, cann't you slip on a black wig and a gown, and be old Bramble yourself?

Myrt. Ha! I don't dislike it——but what shall I do for a brother in the case?

B. jun. What think you of my fellow Tom? The rogue's intelligent, and is a good mimic; all his part

will be but to stutter heartily, for that's old Target's case—"nay, it would be an immoral thing to mock "him, were it not that his impatience is the occasion "of its breaking out to that degree."—The conduct of the scene will chiefly lie upon you.

Myrt. I like it of all things; if you'll send Tom to my chambers I will give him full instructions. This will certainly give me occasion to raise difficulties, to puzzle or confound her project for a while at least.

B. jun. I warrant you success; so far we are right then. And now, Charles, your apprehension of my marrying her is all you have to get over.

Myrt. Dear Bevil! tho' I know you are my friend, yet when I abstract myself from my own interest in the thing, I know no objection she can make to you, or you to her, and therefore hope——

B. jun. Dear Myrtle! I am as much oblig'd to you for the cause of your suspicion, as I am offended at the effect; but be assured I am taking measures for your certain security, and that all things, with regard to me, will end in your entire satisfaction.

Myrt. Well, I'll promise you to be as easy and as confident as I can, tho' I cannot but remember that I have more than life at stake on your fidelity.

[*Going.*

B. jun. Then, depend upon it, you have no chance against you.

Myrt. Nay, no ceremony; you know I must be going. [*Exit* Myrtle.

B. jun. Well, this is another instance of the per-

plexities which arise too in faithful friendship. "We "must often in this life go on in our good offices, even "under the displeasure of those to whom we do them, "in compassion to their weaknesses and mistakes." But all this while poor Indiana is tortured with the doubt of me; "she has no support or comfort but "in my fidelity, yet sees me daily press'd to mar- "riage with another. How painful, in such a crisis, "must be every hour she thinks on me! I'll let her "see, at least, my conduct to her is not chang'd:" I'll take this opportunity to visit her; for tho' the religious vow I have made to my father restrains me from ever marrying without his approbation, yet that confines me not from seeing a virtuous woman, that is the pure delight of my eyes and the guiltless joy of my heart. But the best condition of human life is but a gentler misery.

To hope for perfect happiness is vain,
And love has ever its allays of pain. [Exit.

SCENE II.

INDIANA's *Lodgings.* *Enter* ISABELLA *and* INDIANA.

Isab. Yes——I say 'tis artifice, dear child! I say to thee, again and again, 'tis all skill and management.

Ind. Will you persuade me there can be an ill design in supporting me in the condition of a woman of quality! attended, dress'd, and lodg'd, like one in my

appearance abroad, and my furniture at home, every way in the most sumptuous manner, and he that does it has an artifice, a design in it?

Isab. Yes, yes.

Ind. And all this without so much as explaining to me that all about me comes from him?

Isab. Ay, ay—the more for that—that keeps the title to all you have the more in him.

Ind. The more in him!—he scorns the thought—

Isab. Then he—he—he——

Ind. Well, be not so eager.——If he is an ill man let's look into his stratagems: here is another of them: [*Shewing a letter.*] here's two hundred and fifty pounds in bank-notes, with these words, "To pay for the "set of dressing-plate which will be brought home "to-morrow." Why, dear aunt! now here's another piece of skill for you which I own I cannot comprehend—and it is with a bleeding heart I hear you say any thing to the disadvantage of Mr. Bevil. When he is present I look upon him as one to whom I owe my life and the support of it; then again, as the man who loves me with sincerity and honour. When his eyes are cast another way, and I dare survey him, my heart is painfully divided between shame and love—"Oh, I could tell you——

"*Isab.* Oh, you need not; I imagine all this for "you.

"*Ind.* This is my state of mind in his presence, and "when he is absent, you are ever dinning my ears "with notions of the arts of men, that his hidden

" bounty, his respectful conduct, his careful provi-
" sion for me, after his preserving me from the ut-
" most misery, are certain signs he means nothing but
" to make I know not what of me.

" *Isab.* Oh, you have a sweet opinion of him truly!

" *Ind.* I have, when I am with him, ten thousand
" things, besides my sex's natural decency and shame,
" to suppress my heart, that yearns to thank, to
" praise, to say it loves him." I say thus it is with me while I see him, and in his absence I am entertain'd with nothing but your endeavours to tear this amiable image from my heart, and in its stead to place a base dissembler, an artful invader of my happiness, my innocence, my honour.

Isab. Ah, poor soul! has not his plot taken? don't you die for him? has not the way he has taken been the most proper with you? Oh ho! he has sense, and has judged the thing right.

Ind. Go on then, since nothing can answer you; say what you will of him.——Heigh ho!

Isab. Heigh ho! indeed. It is better to say so as you are now than as many others are. There are among the destroyers of women the gentle, the generous, the mild, the affable, the humble, who all, soon after their success in their designs, turn to the contrary of those characters. " I will own to you Mr.
" Bevil carries his hypocrisy the best of any man liv-
" ing; but still he is a man, and therefore a hypo-
" crite. They have usurp'd an exemption from
" shame, from any baseness, any cruelty towards us."

They embrace without love, they make vows without conscience of obligation; they are partners, nay, seducers, to the crime, wherein they pretend to be less guilty.

Ind. That's truly observ'd. [*Aside.*] But what's all this to Bevil?

Isab. This is to Bevil and all mankind. "Trust "not those who will think the worse of you for your "confidence in them; serpents who lie in wait for "doves." Won't you be on your guard against those who would betray you? won't you doubt those who would contemn you for believing 'em? "Take "it from me, fair and natural dealing is to invite "injuries; 'tis bleating to escape wolves who would "devour you:" Such is the world, and such (since the behaviour of one man to myself) have I believed all the rest of the sex. [*Aside.*

Ind. I will not doubt the truth of Bevil, I will not doubt it: he has not spoken it by an organ that is given to lying: his eyes are all that have ever told me that he was mine. I know his virtue, I know his filial piety, and ought to trust his management with a father to whom he has uncommon obligations. What have I to be concern'd for? My lesson is very short. If he takes me for ever, my purpose of life is only to please him. If he leaves me, (which Heaven avert) I know he'll do it nobly; and I shall have nothing to do but to learn to die, after worse than death has happen'd to me.

Isab. Ay, do persist in your credulity! flatter your-

self that a man of his figure and fortune will make himself the jest of the town, and marry a handsome beggar for love.

Ind. The town! I must tell you, madam, the fools that laugh at Mr. Bevil will but make themselves more ridiculous; his actions are the result of thinking, and he has sense enough to make even virtue fashionable.

Isab. "O' my conscience he has turned her head!" Come, come; if he were the honest fool you take him for, why has he kept you here these three weeks without sending you to Bristol in search of your father, your family, and your relations?

Ind. I am convinc'd he still designs it; "and that "nothing keeps him here but the necessity of not "coming to an open breach with his father in regard "to the match he has propos'd him:" besides, has he not writ to Bristol? and has not he advice that my father has not been heard of there almost these twenty years?

Isab. All sham, mere evasion; he is afraid, if he should carry you thither, your honest relations may take you out of his hands, and so blow up all his wicked hopes at once.

Ind. Wicked hopes! did I ever give him any such?

Isab. Has he ever given you any honest ones? Can you say in your conscience he has ever once offer'd to marry you?

Ind. No, but by his behaviour I am convinc'd he will offer it the moment 'tis in his power, or consist-

ent with his honour, to make such a promise good to me.

Isab. His honour!

Ind. I will rely upon it; therefore desire you will not make my life uneasy by these ungrateful jealousies of one to whom I am and wish to be oblig'd; for from his integrity alone I have resolv'd to hope for happiness.

Isab. Nay, I have done my duty; if you won't see, at your peril be it.———

Ind. Let it be.—This is his hour of visiting me.

[*Apart.*

"*Isab.* Oh! to be sure, keep up your form; do "not see him in a bed-chamber. This is pure pru- "dence, when she is liable, whene'er he meets her, "to be conveyed where'er he pleases." [*Apart.*

Ind. All the rest of my life is but waiting till he comes: I live only while I'm with him. [*Exit.*

Isab. Well, go thy way, thou wilful innocent! I once had almost as much love for a man who poorly left me to marry an estate——and I am now, against my will, what they call an old maid—but I will not let the peevishness of that condition grow upon me—only keep up the suspicion of it to prevent this creature's being any other than a virgin, except upon proper terms. [*Exit.*

Re-enter INDIANA, *speaking to a Servant.*

Ind. Desire Mr. Bevil to walk in.——Design! impossible! a base designing mind could never think of

what he hourly puts in practice—and yet, since the late rumour of his marriage he seems more reserv'd than formerly—he sends in too before he sees me, to know if I am at leisure.——Such new respect may cover coldness in the heart—it certainly makes me thoughtful——I'll know the worst at once; I'll lay such fair occasions in his way, that it shall be impossible to avoid an explanation——for these doubts are insupportable.——But see he comes and clears them all.

Enter Bevil, *Jun.*

B. jun. Madam, your most obedient.—I am afraid I broke in upon your rest last night—'twas very late before we parted, but 'twas your own fault; I never saw you in such agreeable humour.

Ind. I am extremely glad we are both pleas'd; for I thought I never saw you better company.

B. jun. Me! madam; you rally; I said very little.

Ind. But I am afraid you heard me say a great deal; and when a woman is in the talking vein, the most agreeable thing a man can do, you know, is to have patience to hear her.

B. jun. Then it's pity, madam, you should ever be silent, that we might be always agreeable to one another.

Ind. If I had your talent or power to make my actions speak for me, I might indeed be silent, and yet pretend to something more than the agreeable.

B. jun. If I might be vain of any thing in my power,

madam, it is that my understanding, from all your sex, has mark'd you out as the most deserving object of my esteem.

Ind. Should I think I deserve this, it were enough to make my vanity forfeit the esteem you offer me.

B. jun. How so, madam?

Ind. Because esteem is the result of reason, and to deserve it from good sense the height of human glory.—Nay, I had rather a man of honour should pay me that, than all the homage of a sincere and humble love.

B. jun. You certainly distinguish right, madam; love often kindles from external merit only—

Ind. But esteem arises from a higher source, the merit of the soul—

B. jun. True———and great souls only can deserve it. [*Bowing respectfully.*

Ind. Now I think they are greater still that can so charitably part with it.

B. jun. Now, madam, you make me vain, since the utmost pride and pleasure of my life is that I esteem you—as I ought.

Ind. [*Aside.*] As he ought! still more perplexing! he neither saves nor kills my hope.

B. jun. But, madam, we grow grave, methinks—let's find some other subject.———Pray how did you like the opera last night?

Ind. First give me leave to thank you for my tickets.

B. jun. Oh! your servant, madam.—"But pray "tell me; you now who are never partial to the

" fashion, I fancy, must be the propèrest judge of a " mighty dispute among the ladies, that is, whether " Crispo or Griselda is the more agreeable entertain- " ment.

" *Ind.* With submission now I cannot be a proper " judge of this question.

" *B. jun.* How so, madam?

" *Ind.* Because I find I have a partiality for one of " them.

" *B. jun.* Pray which is that?

" *Ind.* I do not know—there's something in that " rural cottage of Griselda, her forlorn condition, " her poverty, her solitude, her resignation, her in- " nocent slumbers, and that lulling *dolce sogno* that's " sung over her, it had an effect upon me that—In " short, I never was so well deceiv'd at any of them.

" *B. jun.* Oh! now then I can account for the dis- " pute: Griselda, it seems, is the distress of an in- " jur'd, innocent woman, Crispo that only of a man " in the same condition; therefore the men are most- " ly concern'd for Crispo, and, by a natural indul- " gence, both sexes for Griselda.

" *Ind.* So that judgment, you think, ought to be " for one, tho' fancy and complaisance have got " ground for the other. Well, I believe you will " never give me leave to dispute with you on any " subject, for I own Crispo has its charms for me " too, though, in the main, all the pleasure the best " opera gives us is but a keen sensation.—Methinks " 'tis pity the mind cann't have a little more share in

" the entertainment.—The music is certainly fine, " but in my thoughts there's none of your composers " come up to old Shakspere and Otway.

" *B. jun.* How, madam! why, if a woman of your " sense were to say this in a drawing-room——"

Enter Servant.

Serv. Sir, here's Signor Carbonelli says he waits your commands in the next room.

B. jun. Apropos! you were saying yesterday, madam, you had a mind to hear him.—Will you give him leave to entertain you now?

" *Ind.* By all means. Desire the gentleman to " walk in. [*Exit Servant.*

" *B. jun.* I fancy you will find something in his " hand that is uncommon.

" *Ind.* You are always finding ways, Mr. Bevil, to " make life seem less tedious to me.

" *Enter Music-master.*

" When the gentleman pleases."

[*After a sonata is played,* Bevil *jun. waits on the master to the door, &c.*]

B. jun. You smile, madam, to see me so complaisant to one whom I pay for his visit. Now I own I think it not enough barely to pay those whose talents are superior to our own (I mean such talents as would become our condition if we had them); methinks we ought to do something more than barely

gratify them for what they do at our command, only because their fortune is below us.

Ind. You say I smile; I assure you it was a smile of approbation; for indeed I cannot but think it the distinguishing part of a gentleman to make his superiority of fortune as easy to his inferiors as he can.—Now, once more to try him. [*Aside.*]——I was saying just now I believe you would never let me dispute with you, and I dare say it will always be so: however, I must have your opinion upon a subject which created a debate between my aunt and me just before you came hither; she would needs have it that no man ever does any extraordinary kindness or service for a woman but for his own sake.

B. jun. Well, madam! indeed I cann't but be of her mind.

Ind. What, tho' he would maintain and support her, without demanding any thing of her on her part!

B. jun. Why, madam, is making an expence in the service of a valuable woman, (for such I must suppose her) though she should never do him any favour, nay, though she should never know who did her such service, such a mighty heroic business?

Ind. Certainly! I should think he must be a man of an uncommon mould.

B. jun. Dear madam! why so? 'tis but at best a better taste in expence. To bestow upon one whom he may think one of the ornaments of the whole creation, to be conscious that from his superfluity an

innocent, a virtuous spirit is supported above the temptations, the sorrows of life; that he sees satisfaction, health, and gladness in her countenance, while he enjoys the happiness of seeing her: (as that I will suppose too, or he must be too abstracted, too insensible) I say, if he is allowed to delight in that prospect, alas! what mighty matter is there in all this?

Ind. No mighty matter in so disinterested a friendship!

B. jun. Disinterested! I cann't think him so. Your hero, madam, is no more than what every gentleman ought to be, and I believe very many are——he is only one who takes more delight in reflections than in sensations; he is more pleased with thinking than eating; that's the utmost you can say of him.—— Why, madam, a greater expence than all this men lay out upon an unnecessary stable of horses.

Ind. Can you be sincere in what you say!

B. jun. You may depend upon it, if you know any such man, he does not love dogs inordinately.

Ind. No, that he does not.

B. jun. Nor cards, nor dice.

Ind. No.

B. jun. Nor bottle companions.

Ind. No.

B. jun. Nor loose women.

Ind. No, I'm sure he does not.

B. jun. Take my word then, if your admired hero

is not liable to any of these kind of demands, there's no such pre-eminence in this as you imagine: nay, this way of expence you speak of, is what exalts and raises him that has a taste for it, and at the same time his delight is incapable of satiety, disgust, or penitence.

Ind. But still I insist, his having no private interest in the action makes it prodigious, almost incredible.

B. jun. Dear madam! I never knew you more mistaken. Why, who can be more an usurer than he who lays out his money in such valuable purchases? If pleasure be worth purchasing, how great a pleasure is it to him, who has a true taste of life, to ease an aching heart; to see the human countenance lighted up into smiles of joy, on the receipt of a bit of ore, which is superfluous, and otherwise useless, in a man's own pocket! What could a man do better with his cash? This is the effect of a humane disposition, where there is only a general tie of nature and common necessity; what then must it be, when we serve an object of merit, of admiration!

Ind. Well, the more you argue against it, the more I shall admire the generosity.

B. jun. Nay—then, madam, 'tis time to fly, after a declaration that my opinion strengthens my adversary's argument—I had best hasten to my appointment with Mr. Myrtle, and be gone while we are friends, and—before things are brought to an extremity.— [*Exit carelessly.*

Enter ISABELLA.

Isab. Well, madam, what think you of him now, pray?

Ind. I protest I begin to fear he is wholly disinterested in what he does for me. On my heart, he has no other view but the mere pleasure of doing it, and has neither good or bad designs upon me.

Isab. Ah, dear niece! don't be in fear of both; I'll warrant you, you will know time enough that he is not indifferent.

Ind. You please me when you tell me so; for if he has any wishes towards me, I know he will not pursue them but with honour.

Isab. I wish I were as confident of one as t'other.—I saw the respectful downcast of his eye when you catch'd him gazing at you during the music. "He, "I warrant, was surpris'd as if he had been taken "stealing your watch." Oh the undissembled guilty look!

Ind. But did you observe any thing really? I thought he look'd most charmingly graceful. How engaging is modesty in a man when one knows there is a great mind within! "So tender a confusion, and "yet, in other respects, so much himself, so col-"lected, so dauntless, so determin'd!"

Isab. Ah, niece! "there is a sort of bashfulness "which is the best engine to carry on a shameless "purpose." Some men's modesty serves their wickedness, as hypocrisy gains the respect due to piety.

But I will own to you, there is one hopeful symptom, if there could be such a thing as a disinterested lover; but till—till—till—

Ind. 'Till what?

Isab. Till I know whether Mr. Myrtle and Mr. Bevil are really friends or foes—and that I will be convinc'd of before I sleep, for you shall not be deceiv'd. [*Exit.* Isab.

Ind. I'm sure I never shall, if your fears can guard me. In the mean time, I'll wrap myself up in the integrity of my own heart, nor dare to doubt of his.

As conscious honour all his actions steers,
So conscious innocence dispels my fears. [Exit.

ACT III. SCENE I.

SEALAND'S *House.* *Enter* TOM, *meeting* PHILLIS.

Tom.

WELL, Phillis!——What! with a face as if you had never seen me before?——What a work have I to do now! She has seen some new visitant at their house, whose airs she has catch'd, and is resolv'd to practise them upon me. Numberless are the changes she'll dance thro' before she'll answer this plain question, *videlicet*, Have you deliver'd my master's letter to your lady? Nay, I know her too well to ask an account of it in an ordinary way; I'll be in my airs as well as she. [*Aside.*]——Well, madam, as un-

happy as you are at present pleased to make me, I would not in the general be any other than what I am; I would not be a bit wiser, a bit richer, a bit taller, a bit shorter, than I am at this instant.

[*Looking stedfastly at her.*

Phil. Did ever any body doubt, Master Thomas, but that you were extremely satisfied with your sweet self?

Tom. I am, indeed.—The thing I have least reason to be satisfied with is my fortune, and I am glad of my poverty; perhaps, if I were rich, I should overlook the finest woman in the world, that wants nothing but riches to be thought so.

Phil. How prettily was that said! But I'll have a great deal more before I'll say one word. [*Aside.*

Tom. I should perhaps have been stupidly above her had I not been her equal, and by not being her equal, never had opportunity of being her slave. I am my master's servant for hire, I am my mistress's from choice, wou'd she but approve my passion.

Phil. I think it is the first time I ever heard you speak of it with any sense of anguish, if you really do suffer any.

Tom. Ah, Phillis! can you doubt after what you have seen?

Phil. I know not what I have seen, nor what I have heard; but since I am at leisure, you may tell me when you fell in love with me, how you fell in love with me, and what you have suffer'd, or are ready to suffer for me.

Tom. Oh the unmerciful jade! when I'm in haste about my master's letter—But I must go thro' it. [*Aside.*]—Ah! too well I remember when, and how, and on what occasion, I was first surpris'd. It was on the first of April, one thousand seven hundred and fifteen, I came into Mr. Sealand's service; I was then a hobble-de-hoy, and you a pretty little tight girl, a favourite handmaid of the housekeeper.—— At that time we neither of us knew what was in us. I remember I was ordered to get out of the window, one pair of stairs, to rub the sashes clean—the person employed on the inner side was your charming self, whom I had never seen before.

Phil. I think I remember the silly accident. What made ye, you oaf, ready to fall down into the street?

Tom. You know not, I warrant you—you could not guess what surpris'd me—you took no delight when you immediately grew wanton in your conquest, and put your lips close and breath'd upon the glass, and when my lips approach'd, a dirty cloth you rubb'd against my face, and hid your beauteous form; when I again drew near, you spit and rubb'd, and smil'd at my undoing.

Phil. What silly thoughts you men have!

Tom. We were Pyramus and Thisbe—but ten times harder was my fate: Pyramus could peep only thro' a wall; I saw her, saw my Thisbe in all her beauty, but as much kept from her as if a hundred walls between; for there was more, there was her will against

me.—Would she but relent!——Oh Phillis! Phillis! shorten my torment, and declare you pity me.

Phil. I believe it's very sufferable; the pain is not so exquisite but that you may bear it a little longer.

Tom. Oh, my charming Phillis! if all depended on my fair one's will, I could with glory suffer——but, dearest creature! consider our miserable state.

Phil. How! miserable!

Tom. We are miserable to be in love, and under the command of others than those we love—with that generous passion in the heart to be sent to and fro on errands, call'd, check'd, and rated for the meanest trifles——Oh, Phillis! you don't know how many China cups and glasses my passion for you has made me break: you have broken my fortune as well as my heart.

Phil. Well, Mr. Thomas, I cannot but own to you that I believe your master writes, and you speak, the best of any men in the world. Never was a woman so well pleas'd with a letter as my young lady was with his, and this is an answer to it. [*Gives him a letter.*

Tom. This was well done, my dearest! Consider, we must strike out some pretty livelihood for ourselves by closing their affairs: it will be nothing for them to give us a little being of our own, some small tenement, out of their large possessions: whatever they give us, it will be more than what they keep for themselves: one acre with Phillis would be worth a whole country without her.

Phil. Oh, could I but believe you!

Tom. If not the utterance, believe the touch of my lips. [*Kisses her.*

Phil. There's no contradicting you. How closely you argue, Tom!

Tom. And will closer in due time; but I must hasten with this letter, to hasten towards the possession of you—then, Phillis, consider how I must be reveng'd (look to it!) of all your skittishness, shy looks, and at best but coy compliances.

Phil. Oh, Tom! you grow wanton and sensual, as my lady calls it: I must not endure it. Oh, foh! you are a man, an odious, filthy male creature! you should behave, if you had a right sense, or were a man of sense, like Mr. Cimberton, with distance and indifference; "or, let me see, some other becom-"ing hard word, with seeming in—in—advertency," and not rush on one as if you were seizing a prey. But hush—the ladies are coming.—Good Tom, don't kiss me above once, and be gone.—Lard! we have been fooling and toying, and not consider'd the main business of our masters and mistresses.

Tom. Why, their business is to be fooling and toying as soon as the parchments are ready.

Phil. Well remember'd—Parchments—my lady, to my knowledge, is preparing writings between her coxcomb, cousin Cimberton, and my mistress, though my master has an eye to the parchments already prepar'd between your master, Mr. Bevil, and my mistress; and I believe my mistress herself has sign'd and seal'd in her heart to Mr. Myrtle.—Did I not

bid you kiss me but once and be gone? but I know you won't be satisfy'd.

Tom. No, you smooth creature! how should I?

[*Kisses her hand.*

Phil. Well, since you are so humble, or so cool, as to ravish my hand only, I'll take my leave of you like a great lady, and you a man of quality.

[*They salute formally.*

Tom. Pox of all this state!

[*Offers to kiss her more closely.*

Phil. No, pr'ythee, Tom, mind your business. "We "must follow that interest which will take, but en- "deavour at that which will be most for us, and we "like most."——Oh, here is my young mistress! [Tom *taps her neck behind, and kisses his fingers.*] Go, ye liquorish fool. [*Exit* Tom.

Enter LUCINDA.

Luc. Who was that you were hurrying away?

Phil. One that I had no mind to part with.

Luc. Why did you turn him away then?

Phil. For your ladyship's service, to carry your ladyship's letter to his master. I could hardly get the rogue away.

Luc. Why, has he so little love for his master?

Phil. No, but he has so much love for his mistress.

Luc. But I thought I heard him kiss you: why do you suffer that?

Phil. Why, madam, we vulgar take it to be a sign of love. We servants, we poor people, that have

nothing but our persons to bestow or treat for, "are "fore'd to deal and bargain by way of sample; "and "therefore, as we have no parchments or wax ne- "cessary in our agreements, we" squeeze with our hands, and seal with our lips, to ratify vows and promises.

Luc. But cann't you trust one another, without such earnest down?

Phil. We don't think it safe, any more than you gentry, to come together without deeds executed.

Luc. Thou art a pert, merry hussy.

Phil. I wish, madam, your lover and you were as happy as Tom and your servant are.

Luc. You grow impertinent.

Phil. I have done, madam; and I won't ask you what you intend to do with Mr. Myrtle, what your father will do with Mr. Bevil, nor what you all, especially my lady, mean by admitting Mr. Cimberton as particularly here as if he were married to you already; nay, you are married actually, as far as people of quality are.

Luc. How's that?

Phil. You have different beds in the same house.

Luc. Pshaw! I have a very great value for Mr. Bevil, but have absolutely put an end to his pretensions in the letter I gave you for him; "but my fa- "ther, in his heart, still has a mind to him, were it "not for this woman they talk of, and I am apt to "imagine he is married to her, or never designs to "marry at all."

Phil. Then, Mr. Myrtle———

Luc. He had my parents' leave to apply to me, and by that he has won me and my affections: who is to have this body of mine, without 'em, it seems is nothing to me: my mother says, 'tis indecent for me to let my thoughts stray about the person of my husband; nay, she says a maid rightly virtuous, tho' she may have been where her lover was a thousand times, should not have made observations enough to know him from another man when she sees him in a third place.

Phil. That's more than the severity of a nun, for not to see when one may is hardly possible, not to see when one cann't is very easy: at this rate, madam, there are a great many whom you have not seen, who——.

Luc. Mamma says, the first time you see your husband should be at that instant he is made so. When your father, with the help of the minister, gives you to him, then you are to see him, then you are to observe and take notice of him, because then you are to obey him.

Phil. But does not my lady remember you are to love as well as to obey?

Luc. To love is a passion, 'tis a desire, and we must have no desires. Oh! I cannot endure the reflection! With what insensibility on my part, with what more than patience, have I been expos'd and offer'd to some awkward booby or other in every county of Great Britain!

Phil. Indeed, madam, I wonder I never heard you speak of it before with this indignation.

Luc. Every corner of the land has presented me with a wealthy coxcomb: as fast as one treaty has gone off, another has come on, till my name and person has been the tittle-tattle of the whole town.—— "What is this world come to! no shame left! to be "bartered for like the beasts of the field, and that in "such an instance as coming together, to an entire "familiarity, and union of soul and body, and this "without being so much as well-wishers to each "other, but for increase of fortune!"

Phil. But, madam, all these vexations will end very soon in one for all: Mr. Cimberton is your mother's kinsman, and three hundred years an older gentleman than any lover you ever had; for which reason, with that of his prodigious large estate, she is resolved on him, and has sent to consult the lawyers accordingly; nay has, whether you know it or no, been in treaty with Sir Geoffry, who, to join in the settlement, has accepted of a sum to do it, and is every moment expected in town for that purpose.

Luc. How do you get all this intelligence?

Phil. By an art I have, I thank my stars, beyond all the waiting-maids in Great-Britain; the art of listening, madam, for your ladyship's service.

Luc. I shall soon know as much as you do. Leave me, leave me, Phillis; begone. Here, here, I'll turn you out. My mother says I must not converse with my servants, though I must converse with no

one else. [*Exit* Phil.] "How unhappy are we who "are born to great fortunes! No one looks at us with "indifference, or acts towards us on the foot of "plain-dealing, yet by all I have been heretofore "offered to, or treated for, I have been us'd with "the most agreeable of all abuses, flattery; but now "by this flegmatic fool I am us'd as nothing, or a "mere thing: he, forsooth, is too wise, too learned "to have any regard to desires, and I know not what "the learned oaf calls sentiments of love and pas-"sion!"—Here he comes, with my mother—it's much if he looks at me, or if he does, takes no more notice of me than of any other moveable in the room.

Enter Mrs. SEALAND *and Mr.* CIMBERTON.

Mrs. Seal. How do I admire this noble, this learned taste of yours, and the worthy regard you have to our own ancient and honourable house, in consulting a means to keep the blood as pure and as regularly descended as may be?

Cimb. Why really, madam, the young women of this age are treated with discourses of such a tendency, and their imaginations so bewilder'd in flesh and blood, that a man of reason cann't talk to be understood: they have no ideas of happiness but what are more gross than the gratification of hunger and thirst.

Isac. With how much reflection he is a coxcomb! [*Aside.*

Cimb. And in truth, madam, I have consider'd it as a most brutal custom that persons of the first character in the world should go as ordinarily, and with as little shame, to bed as to dinner with one another. They proceed to the propagation of the species as openly as to the preservation of the individual.

Luc. She that willingly goes to bed to thee must have no shame, I'm sure. [*Aside.*

Mrs. Seal. Oh, cousin Cimberton! cousin Cimberton! how abstracted, how refined is your sense of things! but indeed it is too true, there is nothing so ordinary as to say in the best govern'd families my master and lady are gone to bed—one does not know but it might have been said of one's self.

[*Hiding her face with her fan.*

Cimb. Lycurgus, madam, instituted otherwise: among the Lacedemonians, the whole female world was pregnant, but none but the mothers themselves knew by whom; their meetings were secret, and the amorous congress always by stealth; and no such professed doings between the sexes as are tolerated among us under the audacious word marriage.

Mrs. Seal. Oh! had I liv'd in those days, and been a matron of Sparta, one might with less indecency have had ten children according to that modest institution, than one under the confusion of our modern barefac'd manner.

Luc. And yet, poor woman! she has gone through the whole ceremony, and here I stand a melancholy proof of it. [*Aside.*

Mrs. Seal. We will talk then of business. That girl, walking about the room there, is to be your wife: she has, I confess, no ideas, no sentiments, that speak her born of a thinking mother.

Cimb. I have observ'd her; her lively look, free air, and disengaged countenance, speak her very——

Luc. Very what?

Cimb. If you please, madam—to set her a little that way.

Mrs. Seal. Lucinda, say nothing to him, you are not a match for him: when you are married, you may speak to such a husband when you're spoken to; but I am disposing of you above yourself every way.

Cimb. Madam, you cannot but observe the inconveniencies I expose myself to, in hopes that your ladyship will be the consort of my better part. As for the young woman, she is rather an impediment than a help to a man of letters and speculation. Madam, there is no reflection, no philosophy, can at all times subdue the sensitive life, but the animal shall sometimes carry away the man——Ha! ay, the vermilion of her lips!

Luc. Pray don't talk of me thus.

Cimb. The pretty enough—pant of her bosom!

Luc. Sir! madam, don't you hear him?

Cimb. Her forward chest!

Luc. Intolerable!

Cimb. High health!

Luc. The grave, easy, impudence of him!

Cimb. Proud heart!

Luc. Stupid coxcomb!

Cimb. I say, madam, her impatience, while we are looking at her, throws out all attractions—her arms—her neck—what a spring in her step!

Luc. Don't you run me over thus, you strange unaccountable———

Cimb. What an elasticity in her veins and arteries!

Luc. I have no veins, no arteries!

Mrs. Seal. Oh, child! hear him; he talks finely; he's a scholar; he knows what you have.

Cimb. The speaking invitation of her shape, the gathering of herself up, and the indignation you see in the pretty little thing!—Now I am considering her on this occasion but as one that is to be pregnant—

"*Luc.* The familiar, learned, unseasonable puppy! [*Aside.*"

Cimb. And pregnant undoubtedly she will be yearly: I fear I sha'n't for many years have discretion enough to give her one fallow season.

Luc. Monster! there's no bearing it. The hideous sot!—There's no enduring it, to be thus surveyed like a steed at sale!

Cimb. At sale!—she's very illiterate; but she's very well limb'd too. Turn her in, I see what she is.

Mrs. Seal. Go, you creature! I am asham'd of you. [*Exit* Lucinda *in a rage.*

Cimb. No harm done.—You know, madam, the better sort of people, as I observ'd to you, treat by their lawyers of weddings, [*adjusting himself at the glass*] and the woman in the bargain, like the man-

sion-house in the sale of the estate, is thrown in, and what that is, whether good or bad, is not at all consider'd.

Mrs. Seal. I grant it, and therefore make no demand for her youth and beauty, and every other accomplishment, as the common world think 'em, because she is not polite.

Cimb. "I know your exalted understanding, ab-"stracted as it is from vulgar prejudice, will not be "offended when I declare to you," madam, I marry to have an heir to my estate, and not to beget a colony or a plantation. This young woman's beauty and constitution will demand provision for a tenth child at least.

Mrs. Seal. "With all that wit and learning, how "considerate! what an economist! [*Aside.*] Sir, I "cannot make her any other than what she is, or say "she is much better than the other young women of "this age, or fit for much besides being a mother;" but I have given directions for the marriage settlements, and Sir Geoffry Cimberton's counsel is to meet ours here at this hour concerning his joining in the deed, which, when executed, makes you capable of settling what is due to Lucinda's fortune. Herself, as I told you, I say nothing of.

Cimb. No, no, no; indeed, madam, it is not usual, and I must depend upon my own reflection and philosophy not to overstock my family.

Mrs. Seal. I cannot help her, cousin Cimberton,

but she is, for ought I see, as well as the daughter of any body else.

Cimb. That is very true, madam.

Enter a Servant, who whispers Mrs. SEALAND.

Mrs. Seal. The lawyers are come, "and now we "are to hear what they have resolved as to the point, "whether it is necessary that Sir Geoffry should join "in the settlement, as being what they call in the "remainder." But, good cousin, you must have patience with 'em. These lawyers, I am told, are of a different kind; one is what they call a chamber-counsel, the other a pleader: the conveyancer is slow from an imperfection in his speech, and therefore shunn'd the bar, but extremely passionate, and impatient of contradiction: the other is as warm as he, but has a tongue so voluble, and a head so conceited, he will suffer nobody to speak but himself.

Cimb. You mean old Serjeant Target and Counsellor Bramble: I have heard of 'em.

Mrs. Seal. The same: shew in the gentlemen.

[*Exit Servant.*

Re-enter Servant, introducing MYRTLE *and* TOM, *disguis'd as* BRAMBLE *and* TARGET.

Mrs. Seal. Gentlemen, this is the party concern'd, Mr. Cimberton; and I hope you have consider'd of the matter.

Targ. Yes, madam, we have agreed that it must be by indent—dent—dent—dent—

Bramb. Yes, madam, Mr. Serjeant and myself have agreed, as he is pleas'd to inform you, that it must be an indenture tripartite, and tripartite let it be, for Sir Geoffry must needs be a party. Old Cimberton, in the year 1619, says, in that ancient roll in Mr. Serjeant's hands, as recourse thereto being had will more at large appear——

Targ. Yes, and by the deeds in your hands it appears that——

Bramb. Mr. Serjeant, I beg of you to make no inferences upon what is in our custody, but speak to the titles in your own deeds.—I shall not shew that deed till my client is in town.

Cimb. You know best your own methods.

Mrs. Seal. The single question is, Whether the entail is such, that my cousin, Sir Geoffry, is necessary in this affair?

Bramb. Yes, as to the lordship of Tretriplet, but not as to the messuage of Grimgribber.

Targ. I say that Gr—gr—, that Gr—gr—, Grimgribber, Grimgribber is in us; that is to say, the remainder thereof, as well as that of Tr—, Tr—, Triplet.

Bramb. You go upon the deed of Sir Ralph, made in the middle of the last century, precedent to that in which old Cimberton made over the remainder, and made it pass to the heirs general, by which your client comes in; and I question whether the remainder even of Tretriplet is in him——but we are willing to wave that, and give him a valuable considera-

tion. But we shall not purchase what is in us for ever, as Gringribber is, at the rate as we guard against the contingent of Mr. Cimberton having no son.——Then we know Sir Geoffry is the first of the collateral male line in this family——yet——

Targ. Sir, Gr——gr——ber is—

Bramb. I apprehend you very well, and your argument might be of force, and we would be inclin'd to hear that in all its parts—but, sir, I see very plainly what you are going into—I tell you it is as probable a contingent that Sir Geoffry may die before Mr. Cimberton as that he may outlive him.

Targ. Sir, we are not ripe for that yet, but I must say—

Bramb. Sir, I allow you the whole extent of that argument, but that will go no farther than as to the claimants under old Cimberton.—I am of opinion that, according to the instructions of Sir Ralph, he could not dock the entail, and then create a new estate for the heirs in general.

Targ. Sir, I have no patience to be told, that when Gr—gr—ber——

Bramb. I will allow it you, Mr. Serjeant; but there must be the words heirs for ever to make such an estate as you pretend.

Cimb. I must be impartial though you are counsel for my side of the question.——Were it not that you are so good as to allow him what he has not said, I should think it very hard you should answer him without hearing him.——But, gentlemen, I believe

you have both consider'd this matter, and are firm in your different opinions; 'twere better therefore you proceeded according to the particular sense of each of you, and give your thoughts distinctly in writing ——And, do you see, sirs, pray let me have a copy of what you say in English.

Bramb. Why, what is all we have been saying?—In English! Oh! but I forgot myself; you're a wit. ——But however, to please you, sir, you shall have it in as plain terms as the law will admit of.

Cimb. But I will have it, sir, without delay.

Bramb. That, sir, the law will not admit of; the courts are sitting at Westminster, and I am this moment oblig'd to be at every one of them, and 'twould be wrong if I should not be in the Hall to attend one of 'em at least; the rest would take it ill else:—— therefore I must leave what I have said to Mr. Serjeant's consideration, and I will digest his arguments on my part, and you shall hear from me again, sir.

[*Exit* Bramble.

Targ. Agreed, agreed.

Cimb. Mr. Bramble is very quick—he parted a little abruptly.

Targ. He could not bear my argument; I pinched him to the quick about that Gr—gr—ber.

Mrs. Seal. I saw that, for he durst not so much as hear you.——I shall send to you, Mr. Serjeant, as soon as Sir Geoffry comes to town, and then I hope all may be adjusted.

Targ. I shall be at my chambers at my usual hours. [*Exit.*

Cimb. Madam, if you please, I'll now attend you to the tea-table, where I shall hear from your ladyship reason and good sense, after all this law and gibberish.

Mrs. Seal. 'Tis a wonderful thing, sir, that men of their profession do not study to talk the substance of what they have to say in the language of the rest of the world; sure they'd find their account in it.

Cimb. They might perhaps, madam, with people of your good sense, but with the generality 'twould never do: the vulgar would have no respect for truth and knowledge if they were expos'd to naked view.

Truth is too simple of all art bereav'd;
Since the world will—why let it be deceiv'd. [Exeunt.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

BEVIL, *Junior's, Lodgings.* BEVIL, *Jun. with a letter in his hand, followed by* TOM.

Tom.

UPON my life, sir, I know nothing of the matter: I never open'd my lips to Mr. Myrtle about any thing of your honour's letter to Madam Lucinda.

B. jun. What's the fool in such a fright for! I don't

suppose you did: what I would know is, whether Mr. Myrtle shew'd any suspicion, or ask'd you any questions, to lead you to say casually that you had carried any such letter for me this morning?

Tom. Why, sir, if he did ask me any questions, how could I help it?

B. jun. I don't say you could, oaf! I am not questioning you but him. What did he say to you?

Tom. Why, sir, when I came to his chambers to be dress'd for the lawyer's part your honour was pleased to put me upon, he ask'd me if I had been to Mr. Sealand's this morning?——So I told him, sir, I often went thither——because, sir, if I had not said that, he might have thought there was something more in my going now than at another time.

B. jun. Very well.—The fellow's caution I find has given him this jealousy. [*Aside.*] Did he ask you no other questions?

Tom. Yes, sir—now I remember, as we came away in the hackney-coach from Mr. Sealand's, Tom, says he, as I came in to your master this morning he had you go for an answer to a letter he had sent; pray did you bring him any? says he——Ah! says I, sir, your honour is pleased to joke with me; you have a mind to know whether I can keep a secret or no.

B. jun. And so by shewing him you could, you told him you had one.

Tom. Sir——— [*Confusedly.*

B. jun. What mean actions does jealousy make a man stoop to! how poorly has he us'd art with a ser-

want to make him betray his master!—Well, and when did he give you this letter for me?

Tom. Sir, he writ it before he pull'd off his lawyer's gown at his own chambers.

B. jun. Very well, and what did he say when you brought him my answer to it?

Tom. He look'd a little out of humour, sir, and said it was very well.

B. jun. I knew he would be grave upon't——Wait without.

Tom. Hum! 'gad I don't like this: I am afraid we are in the wrong box here—— [*Exit* Tom.

B. jun. I put on a serenity while my fellow was present, but I have never been more thoroughly disturb'd. This hot man, to write me a challenge on supposed artificial dealing, when I profess'd myself his friend!—I can live contented without glory, but I cannot suffer shame. What's to be done? But first, let me consider Lucinda's letter again. [*Reads.*

"Sir, I hope it is consistent with the laws a woman "ought to impose upon herself, to acknowledge that "your manner of declining a treaty of marriage in "our family, and desiring the refusal may come "from me, has something more engaging in it than "the courtship of him who I fear will fall to my lot, "except your friend exerts himself for our common "safety and happiness. I have reasons for desiring "Mr. Myrtle may not know of this letter till here-"after, and am your most obliged humble servant,

"LUCINDA SEALAND."

Well, but the postscript. [*Reads*

"I won't, upon second thoughts, hide any thing "from you: but my reason for concealing this is, "that Mr. Myrtle has a jealousy in his temper which "gives me some terrors; but my esteem for him in- "clines me to hope that only an ill effect which "sometimes accompanies a tender love, and what "may be cured by a careful and unblamable con- "duct."

Thus has this lady made me her friend and confidant, and put herself in a kind under my protection. I cannot tell him immediately the purport of this letter, except I could cure him of the violent and untractable passion of jealousy, and so serve him and her, by disobeying her in the article of secrecy, more than I should by complying with her directions. But then this duelling, which custom has impos'd upon every man who would live with reputation and honour in the world, how must I preserve myself from imputations there? he'll forsooth call it or think it fear, if I explain without fighting—But his letter—I'll read it again——

"Sir, You have us'd me basely, in corresponding "and carrying on a treaty where you told me you "were indifferent. I have chang'd my sword since "I saw you, which advertisement I thought proper "to send you against the next meeting between you "and the injur'd

"CHARLES MYRTLE."

Enter TOM.

Tom. Mr. Myrtle, sir: would your honour please to see him?

B. jun. Why, you stupid creature, let Mr. Myrtle wait at my lodgings! Shew him up. [*Exit* Tom.] Well, I am resolved upon my carriage to him——he is in love, and in every circumstance of life a little distrustful, which I must allow for.—But here he is.

Enter TOM *introducing* MYRTLE.

Sir, I am extremely obliged to you for this honour ——But, sir, you with your very discerning face, leave the room. [*Exit* Tom.] Well, Mr. Myrtle, your commands with me?

Myrt. The time, the place, our long acquaintance, and many other circumstances which affect me on this occasion, oblige me, without farther ceremony or conference, to desire you would not only, as you already have, acknowledge the receipt of my letter, but also comply with the request in it. I must have farther notice taken of my message than these half lines—I have yours—I shall be at home——

B. jun. Sir, I own I have received a letter from you in a very unusual style, but as I design every thing in this matter shall be your own action, your own seeking, I shall understand nothing but what you are pleas'd to confirm face to face; and I have already forgot the contents of your epistle.

Myrt. This cool manner is very agreeable to the

abuse you have already made of my simplicity and frankness, and I see your moderation tends to your own advantage and not mine, to your own safety, not consideration of your friend.

B. jun. My own safety, Mr. Myrtle!

Myrt. Your own safety, Mr. Bevil.

B. jun. Look you, Mr. Myrtle, there's no disguising that I understand what you would be at: but, sir, you know I have often dared to disapprove of the decisions a tyrant custom has introduced to the breach of all laws both divine and human.

Myrt. Mr. Bevil, Mr. Bevil! it would be a good first principle, in those who have so tender a conscience that way, to have as much abhorrence of doing injuries as—

B. jun. As what?

Myrt. As fear of answering for 'em.

B. jun. As fear of answering for 'em! but that apprehension is just or blamable according to the object of that fear.———I have often told you, in confidence of heart, I abhorred the daring to offend the Author of life, and rushing into his presence. I say, by the very same act, to commit the crime against him, and immediately to urge on to his tribunal.

Myrt. Mr. Bevil, I must tell you this coolness, this gravity, this shew of conscience, shall never cheat me of my mistress. You have indeed the best excuse for life, the hopes of possessing Lucinda; but consider, sir, I have as much reason to be weary of

it if I am to lose her, and my first attempt to recover her shall be to let her see the dauntless man who is to be her guardian and protector.

B. jun. Sir, shew me but the least glimpse of argument, that I am authoris'd, by my own hand, to vindicate any lawless insult of this nature, and I will shew thee, to chastise thee hardly deserves the name of courage. Slight inconsiderate man! There is, Mr. Myrtle, no such terror in quick anger, and you shall you know not why be cool, as you have you know not why been warm.

Myrt. Is the woman one loves so little an occasion of anger? You, perhaps, who know not what it is to love, who have your ready, your commodious, your foreign trinket, for your loose hours, and from your fortune, your specious outward carriage, and other lucky circumstances, as easy a way to the possession of a woman of honour, you know nothing of what it is to be alarmed, to be distracted, with anxiety and terror of losing more than life. Your marriage, happy man! goes on like common business, and in the interim you have your rambling captive, your Indian princess, for your soft moments of dalliance, your convenient, your ready, Indiana.

B. jun. You have touch'd me beyond the patience of a man, and I'm excusable in the guard of innocence, or from the infirmity of human nature, which can bear no more, to accept your invitation and observe your letter.——Sir, I'll attend you.

Enter TOM.

Tom. Did you call, sir? I thought you did; I heard you speak loud.

B. jun. Yes; go call a coach.

Tom. Sir—Master—Mr. Myrtle—Friends—Gentlemen—what d'ye mean? I'm but a servant, or——

B. jun. Call a coach. [*Exit* Tom.

[*A long pause, walking sullenly by each other.*

[*Aside.*] Shall I, tho' provoked to the uttermost, recover myself at the entrance of a third person, and that my servant too, and not have respect enough to all I have ever been receiving from infancy, the obligation to the best of fathers, to an unhappy virgin too, whose life depends on mine? [*Shutting the door.*

[*To* Myrtle.] I have, thank Heaven, had time to recollect myself, and shall not, for fear of what such a rash man as you think of me, keep longer unexplained the false appearances under which your infirmity of temper makes you suffer, when perhaps too much regard to a false point of honour makes me prolong that suffering.

Myrt. I am sure Mr. Bevil cannot doubt but I had rather have satisfaction from his innocence than his sword.

B. jun. Why then would you ask it first that way?

Myrt. Consider you kept your temper yourself no longer than till I spoke to the disadvantage of her you loved.

B. jun. True. But let me tell you I have saved

you from the most exquisite distress; even tho' you had succeeded in the dispute. I know you so well, that I am sure to have found this letter about a man you had killed, would have been worse than death to yourself.—Read it.—When he is thoroughly mortify'd, and shame has got the better of jealousy, he will deserve to be assisted towards obtaining Lucinda.

[*Aside.*

Myrt. With what a superiority has he turn'd the injury upon me as the aggressor! I begin to fear I have been too far transported—"A treaty in our family!" is not that saying too much? I shall relapse——But I find (on the postscript) "something "like jealousy"—With what face can I see my benefactor, my advocate, whom I have treated like a betrayer!—Oh, Bevil! with what words shall I——

B. jun. There needs none; to convince is much more than to conquer.

Myrt. But can you——

B. jun. You have o'erpaid the inquietude you gave me in the change I see in you towards me. Alas! what machines are we! thy face is alter'd to that of another man, to that of my companion, my friend.

Myrt. That I could be such a precipitate wretch!

B. jun. Pray no more

Myrt. Let me reflect how many friends have died by the hands of friends for want of temper; and you must give me leave to say again and again how much I am beholden to that superior spirit you have subdued me with.—What had become of one of us, or

perhaps both, had you been as weak as I was, and as incapable of reason?

B. jun. I congratulate to us both the escape from ourselves, and hope the memory of it will make us dearer friends than ever.

Myrt. Dear Bevil! your friendly conduct has convinced me that there is nothing manly but what is conducted by reason, and agreeable to the practice of virtue and justice; and yet how many have been sacrificed to that idol, the unreasonable opinion of men! Nay, they are so ridiculous in it that they often use their swords against each other with dissembled anger and real fear:

Betray'd by honour, and compell'd by shame,
They hazard being to preserve a name,
Nor dare inquire into the dread mistake,
Till plung'd in sad eternity they make. [Exeunt.

SCENE II.

St. JAMES'S *Park.* *Enter Sir* JOHN BEVIL, *and Mr.* SEALAND.

Sir J. B. Give me leave however, Mr. Sealand, as we are upon a treaty for uniting our families, to mention only the business of an ancient house.—Genealogy and descent are to be of some consideration in an affair of this sort——

Mr. Seal. Genealogy and descent!—"Sir, there has

" been in our family a very large one. There was " Gulfrid the father of Edward, the father of Pto- " lemy, the father of Crassus, the father of Earl " Richard, the father of Henry the Marquis, the fa- " ther of Duke John———

" *Sir J. B.* What! do you rave, Mr. Sealand? all " these great names in your family?

" *Mr. Seal.* These! yes, sir—I have heard my fa- " ther name them all, and more.

" *Sir J. B.* Ay, sir!—and did he say they were all " in your family?

" *Mr. Seal.* Yes, sir, he kept them all—he was the " greatest cocker in England—He said Duke John " won many battles, but never lost him one.

" *Sir J. B.* Oh, sir, your servant! you are laugh- " ing at my laying any stress upon descent.—But I " must tell you, sir, I never knew any one, but he that " wanted that advantage, turn it into ridicule.

" *Mr. Seal.* And I never knew any who had many " better advantages put that into his account. But," Sir John, value yourself as you please upon your an- cient house, I am to talk freely of every thing you are pleased to put into your bill of rates on this oc- casion.—Yet, sir, I have made no objections to your son's family—it is his morals that I doubt.

Sir J. B. Sir, I cann't help saying, that what might injure a citizen's credit, may be no stain to a gentle- man's honour.

Mr. Seal. Sir John, the honour of a gentleman is liable to be tainted by as small a matter as the credit

of a trader: we are talking of a marriage, and in such a case, the father of a young woman will not think it an addition to the honour or credit of her lover—that he is a keeper——

Sir J. B. Mr. Sealand, don't take upon you to spoil my son's marriage with any woman else.

Mr. Seal. Sir John, let him apply to any woman else, and have as many mistresses as he pleases.——

Sir J. B. My son, sir, is a discreet and sober gentleman.

Mr. Seal. Sir, I never saw a man that wench'd soberly and discreetly that ever left it off—the decency observed in the practice hides, from the sinner even, the iniquity of it: "they pursue it, not that their appetites hurry 'em away, but, I warrant you, because "'tis their opinion they may do it.

"*Sir J. B.* Were what you suspect a truth—do "you design to keep your daughter a virgin till you "find a man unblemish'd that way?

"*Mr. Seal.* Sir, as much a cit as you take me for—"I know the town and the world—and give me leave "to say that we merchants are a species of gentry "that have grown into the world this last century, "and are as honourable, and almost as useful, as you "landed folks that have always thought yourselves "so much above us, for your trading, forsooth! is "extended no farther than a load of hay or a fat ox "—You are pleasant people indeed! because you are "generally bred up to be lazy, therefore warrant "you industry is dishonourable.

" *Sir J. B.* Be not offended, sir; let us go back to " our point.

" *Mr. Seal.* Oh! not at all offended—but I don't " love to leave any part of the account unclos'd— " Look you, Sir John, comparisons are odious, and " more particularly so on occasions of this kind, when " we are projecting races that are to be made out of " both sides of the comparisons."

Sir J. B. But my son, sir, is in the eye of the world a gentleman of merit.

Mr. Seal. I own to you I think him so—But, Sir John, I am a man exercised and experienced in chances and disasters; I lost in my earlier years a very fine wife, and with her a poor little infant: this makes me perhaps overcautious to preserve the second bounty of Providence to me, and be as careful as I can of this child.—You'll pardon me; my poor girl, sir, is as valuable to me as your boasted son to you.

Sir J. B. Why, that's one very good reason, Mr. Sealand, why I wish my son had her.

Mr. Seal. There is nothing but this strange lady here, this incognita, that can be objected to him.—Here and there a man falls in love with an artful creature, and gives up all the motives of life to that one passion.

Sir. J. B. A man of my son's understanding cannot be supposed to be one of them.

Mr. Seal. Very wise men have been so enslaved; and when a man marries with one of them upon his hands, whether moved from the demand or the world

or slighter reasons, such a husband soils with his wife for a month perhaps—then good b'w'ye, madam—the show's over—Ah! John Dryden points out such a husband to a hair, where he says,

And while abroad so prodigal the dolt is,
Poor spouse at home as ragged as a colt is.

Now, in plain terms, sir, I shall not care to have my poor girl turned a grazing, and that must be the case when—

Sir J. B. But pray consider, sir, my son——

Mr. Seal. Look you, sir, I'll make the matter short. This unknown lady, as I told you, is all the objection I have to him: but one way or other he is or has been certainly engaged to her—I am therefore resolved this very afternoon to visit her: now from her behaviour or appearance I shall soon be let into what I may fear or hope for.

Sir J. B. Sir, I am very confident there can be nothing inquired into relating to my son that will not, upon being understood, turn to his advantage.

Mr. Seal. I hope that as sincerely as you believe it—Sir John Bevil, when I am satisfied in this great point, if your son's conduct answers the character you give him, I shall wish your alliance more than that of any gentleman in Great Britain, and so your servant. [*Exit.*

Sir J. B. He is gone in a way but barely civil; but his great wealth, and the merit of his only child, the heiress of it, are not to be lost for a little peevishness—— [*Exit.*

" *Enter* HUMPHREY.

" Oh! Humphrey, you are come in a seasonable mi-
" nute; I want to talk to thee, and to tell thee that
" my head and heart are on the rack about my son.

" *Humph.* Sir, you may trust his discretion, I am
" sure you may.

" *Sir J. B.* Why, I do believe I may, and yet I'm
" in a thousand fears when I lay this vast wealth be-
" fore me. When I consider his prepossessions,
" either generous to a folly in an honourable love, or
" abandoned past redemption in a vicious one, and
" from the one or the other his insensibility to the
" fairest prospect towards doubling our estate, a fa-
" ther who knows how useful wealth is, and how ne-
" cessary even to those who despise it, I say a father,
" Humphrey, a father, cannot bear it.

" *Humph.* Be not transported, sir; you will grow
" incapable of taking any resolution in your per-
" plexity.

" *Sir J. B.* Yes, as angry as I am with him, I
" would not have him surprised in any thing.—This
" mercantile rough man may go grossly into the ex-
" amination of this matter, and talk to the gentle-
" woman so as to——

" *Humph.* No, I hope not in an abrupt manner.

" *Sir J. B.* No, I hope not! Why, dost thou know
" any thing of her, or of him, or of any thing of it,
" or all of it?

" *Humph.* My dear master! I know so much, that

"I told him this very day you had reason to be se-
"cretly out of humour about her.

"*Sir J. B.* Did you go so far? Well, what said he
"to that?

"*Humph.* His words were, looking upon me sted-
"fastly, Humphrey, says he, that woman is a woman
"of honour.

"*Sir J. B.* How! do you think he is married to
her, or designs to marry her?

"*Humph.* I can say nothing to the latter—but he
"says he can marry no one without your consent
"while you are living.

"*Sir J. B.* If he said so much, I know he scorns to
"break his word with me.

"*Humph.* I am sure of that.

"*Sir J. B.* You are sure of that!—Well, that's
"some comfort—then I have nothing to do but to
"see the bottom of this matter during this present
"ruffle.—Oh, Humphrey—

"*Humph.* You are not ill, I hope, sir.

"*Sir J. B.* Yes, a man is very ill that is in a very
"ill humour. To be a father, is to be in care for
"one whom you oftener disoblige than please by that
"very care.—Oh that sons could know the duty to a
"father before they themselves are fathers!—But
"perhaps you'll say now that I am one of the hap-
"piest fathers in the world; but I assure you that
"of the very happiest is not a condition to be envied.

"*Humph.* Sir, your pain arises not from the thing
"itself, but your particular sense of it.——You are

" over fond, nay, give me leave to say you are un-
" justly apprehensive from your fondness. My mas-
" ter Bevil never disobliged you, and he will, I know
" he will, do every thing you ought to expect.

" *Sir J. B.* He won't take all this money with this
" girl—For ought I know he will, forsooth, have so
" much moderation, as to think he ought not to force
" his liking for any consideration.

" *Humph.* He is to marry her, not you; he is to
" live with her, not you, sir.

" *Sir J. B.* I know not what to think; but I know
" nothing can be more miserable than to be in this
" doubt—Follow me; I must come to some reso-
" lution."

SCENE III.

BEVIL, *Junior's, Lodgings.* *Enter* TOM *and* PHILLIS.

Tom. Well, madam, if you must speak with Mr. Myrtle, you shall; he is now with my master in the library.

Phil. But you must leave me alone with him, for he can't make me a present, nor I so handsomely take any thing from him before you; it would not be decent.

Tom. It will be very decent indeed for me to retire, and leave my mistress with another man!

Phil. He is a gentleman, and will treat one properly.

Tom. I believe so—but, however, I won't be far off, and therefore will venture to trust you. I'll call him to you. [*Exit* Tom.

Phil. What a deal of pother and sputter here is between my mistress and Mr. Myrtle "from mere "punctilio!" I could any hour of the day get her to her lover, and would do it—but she, forsooth, will allow no plot to get him, but if he can come to her, I know she would be glad of it; I must therefore do her an acceptable violence, and surprise her into his arms. I am sure I go by the best rule imaginable: if she were my maid, I should think her the best servant in the world for doing so by me.

Enter MYRTLE *and* TOM.

Oh, sir! you and Mr. Bevil are fine gentlemen, to let a lady remain under such difficulties as my poor mistress, and not attempt to set her at liberty, or release her from the danger of being instantly married to Cimberton.

Myrt. Tom has been telling—But what is to be done?

Phil. What is to be done!—when a man cann't come at his mistress—why, cann't you fire our house, or the next house to us, to make us run out, and you take us?

Myrt. How, Mrs. Phillis———

Phil. Ay—let me see that rogue deny to fire a house, make a riot, or any other little thing, when there were no other way to come at me.

Tom. I am obliged to you, madam.

Phil. Why, don't we hear every day of people's hanging themselves for love, and won't they venture the hazard of being hanged for love?—Oh! were I a man—

Myrt. What manly thing would you have me undertake, according to your ladyship's notion of a man?

Phil. Only be at once what one time or other you may be, and wish to be, and must be.

Myrt. Dear girl! talk plainly to me, and consider I, in my condition, can't be in very good humour—You say, to be at once what I must be.

Phil. Ay, ay———I mean no more than to be an old man; "I saw you do it very well at the masquerade." In a word, old Sir Geoffry Cimberton is every hour expected in town, to join in the deeds and settlements for marrying Mr. Cimberton——— He is half blind, half lame, half deaf, half dumb; though, as to his passions and desires, he is as warm and ridiculous as when in the heat of youth.

Tom. Come, to the business, and don't keep the gentlemare in suspense for the pleasure of being courted, as you serve me.

Phil. I saw you at the masquerade act such a one to perfection: go, and put on that very habit, and come to our house as Sir Geoffry: there is not one there but myself knows his person; I was born in the parish where he is lord of the manor; I have seen him often and often at church in the country. Do

not hesitate, but come thither; they will think you bring a certain security against Mr. Myrtle, and you bring Mr. Myrtle. Leave the rest to me; I leave this with you, and expect——They don't, I told you, know you; they think you out of town, which you had as good be for ever, if you lose this opportunity. ——I must be gone; I know I am wanted at home.

Myrt. My dear Phillis!

[*Catches and kisses her, and gives her money.*

Phil. Oh fy! my kisses are not my own; you have committed violence; but I'll carry 'em to the right owner. [Tom *kisses her.*] Come, see me down stairs, [*To* Tom.] and leave the lover to think of his last game for the prize. [*Exeunt* Tom *and* Phillis.

Myrt. I think I will instantly attempt this wild expedient——"the extravagance of it will make me "less suspected, and it will give me opportunity to "assert my own right to Lucinda, without whom I "cannot live." But I am so mortify'd at this con-"duct of mine towards poor Bevil! he must think meanly of me.——I know not how to reassume myself, and be in spirit enough for such an adventure as this——yet I must attempt it, if it be only to be near Lucinda under her present perplexities; and sure——

The next delight to transport with the fair,
Is to relieve her in her hours of care. [Exit.

ACT V. SCENE I.

SEALAND's *House.* *Enter* PHILLIS, *with lights before* MYRTLE, *disguised like old Sir* GEOFFRY, *supported by Mrs.* SEALAND, LUCINDA, *and* CIMBERTON.

Mrs. Sealand.

Now I have seen you thus far, Sir Geoffry, will you excuse me a moment, while I give my necessary orders for your accommodation? [*Exit Mrs.* Sealand.

Myrt. I have not seen you, cousin Cimberton, since you were ten years old; and as it is incumbent on you to keep up your name and family, I shall, upon very reasonable terms, join with you in a settlement to that purpose, tho' I must tell you, cousin, this is the first merchant that has married into our house.

Luc. Deuce on 'em! am I a merchant because my father is? [*Aside.*

Myrt. But is he directly a trader at this time?

Cimb. There's no hiding the disgrace, sir; he trades to all parts of the world.

Myrt. We never had one of our family before who descended from persons that did any thing.

Cimb. Sir, since it is a girl that they have, I am, for the honour of my family, willing to take it in again, and to sink it into our name, and no harm done.

Myrt. 'Tis prudently and generously resolved—— Is this the young thing?

Cimb. Yes, sir.

Phil. Good madam! don't be out of humour, but let them run to the utmost of their extravagance—— Hear them out.

Myrt. Cann't I see her nearer? my eyes are but weak.

Phil. Beside, I am sure the uncle has something worth your notice. I'll take care to get off the young one, and leave you to observe what may be wrought out of the old one for your good. [*Exit.*

Cimb. Madam, this old gentleman, your great uncle, desires to be introduced to you, and to see you nearer——Approach, sir.

Myrt. By your leave, young lady—[*Puts on spectacles.*]—Cousin Cimberton, she has exactly that sort of neck and bosom, for which my sister Gertrude was so much admir'd in the year sixty-one, before the French dresses first discovered any thing in women below the chin.

Luc. "What a very odd situation am I in! tho' "I cannot but be diverted at the extravagance of "their humours, equally unsuitable to their age."—Chin, quotha!——I don't believe my passionate lover there knows whether I have one or not. Ha! ha!

Cimb. Madam, I would not willingly offend, but I have a better glass—— [*Pulls out a large one.*

Enter PHILLIS *to* CIMBERTON.

Phil. Sir, my lady desires to shew the apartment to you that she intends for Sir Geoffry.

Cim. Well, sir, by that time you have sufficiently gazed and sunned yourself in the beauties of my spouse there, I will wait on you again.

[*Exit* Cim. *and* Phil.

Myrt. Were it not, madam, that I might be troublesome, there is something of importance, tho' we are alone, which I would say more safe from being heard.

Luc. There is something in this old fellow, methinks, that raises my curiosity.

Myrt. To be free, madam, I as heartily contemn this kinsman of mine as you do, and am sorry to see so much beauty and merit devoted by your parents to so insensible a possessor.

Luc. Surprising!—I hope then, sir, you will not contribute to the wrong you are so generous to pity, whatever may be the interest of your family.

Myrt. This hand of mine shall never be employ'd to sign any thing against your good and happiness.

Luc. I am sorry, sir, it is not in my power to make you proper acknowledgments, but there is a gentleman in the world whose gratitude will, I'm sure, be worthy of the favour.

Myrt. All the thanks I desire, madam, are in your power to give.

Luc. Name them, and command them.

Myrt. Only, madam, that the first time you are alone with your lover you will with open arms receive him.

Luc. As willingly as heart could wish it.

Myrt. Thus then he claims your promise. Oh, Lucinda!

Luc. Oh, a cheat, a cheat, a cheat!

Myrt. Hush! 'tis I, 'tis I, your lover; Myrtle himself, madam.

Luc. Oh, bless me! what rashness and folly to surprise me so!——But hush—my mother——

Enter Mrs. SEALAND, CIMBERTON, *and* PHILLIS.

Mrs. Seal. How now! what's the matter?

Luc. Oh, madam! as soon as you left the room my uncle fell into a sudden fit, and—and—so I cry'd out for help to support him, and conduct him to his chamber.

Mrs. Seal. That was kindly done. Alas, sir! how do you find yourself?

Myrt. Never was taken in so odd a way in my life ——Pray lead me—Oh, I was talking here—Pray carry me——to my cousin Cimberton's young lady—

"*Mrs. Seal.* [*Aside.*] My cousin Cimberton's young "lady! How zealous he is, even in his extremity, for "the match! A right Cimberton!"

[Cimberton *and* Lucinda *lead him as one in pain.*

Cimb. Pox, uncle, you will pull my ear off!

Luc. Pray, uncle, you will squeeze me to death!

Mrs. Seal. No matter, no matter—he knows not what he does. Come, sir, shall I help you out?

Myrt. By no means; I'll trouble nobody but my young cousins here. [Cim. *and* Luc. *lead him off.*

" *Phil.* But pray, madam, does your ladyship in-
" tend that Mr. Cimberton shall really marry my
" young mistress at last? I don't think he likes her.

" *Mrs. Seal.* That's not material; men of his spe-
" culation are above desires.——But be it as it may,
" now I have given old Sir Geoffry the trouble of
" coming up to sign and seal, with what countenance
" can I be off?

" *Phil.* As well as with twenty others, madam. It
" is the glory and honour of a great fortune to live
" in continual treaties, and still to break off; it looks
" great, madam.

" *Mrs. Seal.* True, Phillis—yet to return our blood
" again into the Cimbertons' is an honour not to be
" rejected.—But were not you saying that Sir John
" Bevil's creature, Humphrey, has been with Mr.
" Sealand?

" *Phil.* Yes, madam, I overheard them agree that
" Mr. Sealand should go himself and visit this un-
" known lady that Mr. Bevil is so great with, and if
" he found nothing there to fright him, that Mr.
" Bevil should still marry my young mistress.

" *Mrs. Seal.* How! nay, then he shall find she is
" my daughter as well as his—I'll follow him this in-
" stant, and take the whole family along with me.

"The disputed power of disposing of my own daugh-
"ter shall be at an end this very night.——I'll live
"no longer in anxiety for a little hussy that hurts my
"appearance wherever I carry her, and for whose
"sake I seem to be not at all regarded, and that in
"the best of my days.

"*Phil.* Indeed, madam, if she were married your
"ladyship might very well be taken for Mr. Sealand's
"daughter.

"*Mrs. Seal.* Nay, when the chit has not been with
"me I have heard the men say as much—I'll no
"longer cut off the greatest pleasure of a woman's
"life (the shining in assemblies) by her forward an-
"ticipation of the respect that's due to her superior
"—She shall down to Cimberton-hall—she shall—
"she shall.

"*Phil.* I hope, madam, I shall stay with your lady-
"ship.

"*Mrs. Seal.* Thou shalt, Phillis, and I'll place thee
"then more about me——But order chairs imme-
"diately——I'll be gone this minute." [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Charing-Cross. Enter Mr. SEALAND *and* HUMPHREY.

Mr. Seal. I am very glad, Mr. Humphrey, that you agree with me, that it is for our common good I should look thoroughly into this matter.

Humph. I am indeed of that opinion; for there is no artifice, nothing concealed in our family which ought in justice to be known. I need not desire you, sir, to treat the lady with care and respect.

Mr. Seal. Mr. Humphrey—I shall not be rude, tho' I design to be a little abrupt, and come into the matter at once, to see how she will bear upon a surprise——

Humph. That's the door; sir, I wish you success. [*While* Humphrey *speaks* Sealand *consults his table-book.*] "I am less concern'd what happens there, because I "hear Mr. Myrtle is as well lodg'd as old Sir Geoffry, "so I am willing to let this gentleman employ him-"self here to give them time at home; for I am sure "it is necessary for the quiet of our family that Lu-"cinda were dispos'd of out of it, since Mr. Bevil's "inclination is so much otherwise engaged." [*Exit.*

Mr. Seal. "I think this is the door." [*Knocks.*] I'll carry this matter with an air of authority, to inquire, tho' I make an errand to begin discourse. [*Knocks again, enter a footboy.*] So, young man, is your lady within?

Boy. Alack, sir! I am but a country boy—I don't know whether she is or nea; but an you'll stay a bit I'll goa and ask the gentlewoman that's with her.

Mr. Seal. Why, sirrah, tho' you are a country boy you can see, cann't you? you know whether she is at home when you see her, don't you?

Boy. Nay, nay, I'm not such a country lad neither,

master, to think she is at home because I see her; I have been in town but a month, and I lost one place already for believing my own eyes.

Mr. Seal. Why, sirrah, have you learnt to lie already?

Boy. Ah, master! things that are lies in the country are not lies at London—I begin to know my business a little better than so——but an you please to walk in, I'll call a gentlewoman to you that can tell you for certain——she can make bold to ask my lady herself.

Mr. Seal. Oh, then she is within I find, tho' you dare not say so.

Boy. Nay, nay, that's neither here nor there; what's matter whether she is within or no if she has not amind to see any body?

Mr. Seal. I cann't tell, sirrah, whether you are arch or simple; but however, get me a direct answer, and here's a shilling for you.

Boy. Will you please to walk in; I'll see what I can do for you.

Mr. Seal. I see you will be fit for your business in time, child; but I expect to meet with nothing but extraordinaries in such a house.

Boy. Such a house, sir! you ha'n't seen it yet. Pray walk in.

Mr. Seal. Sir, I'll wait upon you.

SCENE III.

INDIANA's *House.* *Enter* ISABELLA *and* BOY.

Isab. "What anxiety do I feel for this poor crea-
"ture! What will be the end of her? Such a lan-
"guishing unreserved passion for a man that at last
"must certainly leave or ruin her, and perhaps both!
"then the aggravation of the distress is that she dare
"not believe he will——not but I must own if they
"are both what they would seem, they are made for
"one another as much as Adam and Eve were, for
"there is no other of their kind but themselves."
So, Daniel, what news with you?

Boy. Madam, there's a gentleman below wou'd speak with my lady.

Isab. Sirrah, don't you know Mr. Bevil yet?

Boy. Madam, 'tis not the gentleman who comes every day and asks for you, and won't go in till he knows whether you are with her or no.

Isab. Ha! that's a particular I did not know before. Well, be it who it will, let him come up to me.

[*Exit Boy, and re-enters with Mr.* Sealand. Isabella *looks amaz'd.*]

Mr. Seal. Madam, I cann't blame your being a little surpris'd to see a perfect stranger make a visit, and——

Isab. I am indeed surpris'd——I see he does not know me. [*Aside.*

Mr. Seal. You are very prettily lodg'd here, ma-

dam; in troth you seem to have every thing in plenty —a thousand a-year I warrant you, upon this pretty nest of rooms, and the dainty one within them.

[*Aside, and looking about.*

Isab. [*Apart.*] Twenty years, it seems, have less effect in the alteration of a man of thirty than of a girl of fourteen—he's almost still the same: "but, "alas! I find by other men as well as himself I am "not what I was.—As soon as he spoke, I was con- "vinced 'twas he."—How shall I contain my sur- prise and satisfaction!—He must not know me yet.

Mr. Seal. Madam, I hope I don't give you any dis- turbance; but there is a young lady here with whom I have a particular business to discourse, and I hope she will admit me to that favour.

Isab. Why, sir, have you had any notice concern- ing her? I wonder who could give it you.

Mr. Seal. That, madam, is fit only to be commu- nicated to herself.

Isab. Well, sir, you shall see her——"I find he "knows nothing yet, nor shall for me: I am re- "solved I will observe this interlude, this sport of "nature and fortune."—You shall see her presently, sir; for now I am as a mother, and will trust her with you. [*Exit.*

Mr. Seal. As a mother! right; that's the old phrase for one of those commode ladies who lend out beauty for hire to young gentlemen that have pressing oc- casions. But here comes the precious lady herself; in troth a very sightly woman!

Enter INDIANA.

Ind. I am told, sir, you have some affair that requires your speaking with me.

Mr. Seal. Yes, madam. There came to my hands a bill drawn by Mr. Bevil, which is payable to-morrow, and he, in the intercourse of business, sent it to me, who have cash of his, and desired me to send a servant with it; but I have made bold to bring you the money myself.

Ind. Sir, was that necessary?

Mr. Seal. No, madam; but to be free with you, the fame of your beauty, and the regard which Mr. Bevil is a little too well known to have for you, excited my curiosity.

Ind. Too well known to have for me! Your sober appearance, sir, which my friend described, made me expect no rudeness or absurdity at least—Who's there? Sir, if you pay the money to a servant 'twill be as well.

Mr. Seal Pray, madam, be not offended; I came hither on an innocent, nay, a virtuous design; and if you will have patience to hear me, it may be as useful to you, as you are in friendship with Mr. Bevil, as to my only daughter, whom I was this day disposing of.

Ind. You make me hope, sir, I have mistaken you: I am compos'd again: be free, say on—what I am afraid to hear. [*Aside.*

Mr. Seal. I fear'd indeed an unwarranted passion

here, but I did not think it was in abuse of so worthy an object, so accomplish'd a lady, as your sense and mien bespeak—but the youth of our age care not what merit and virtue they bring to shame, so they gratify———

Ind. Sir—you are going into very great errors—but as you are pleas'd to say you see something in me that has chang'd at least the colour of your suspicions, so has your appearance alter'd mine, and made me earnestly attentive to what has any way concern'd you, to inquire into my affairs and character.

Mr. Seal. How sensibly, with what an air she talks!

Ind. Good sir, be seated—and tell me tenderly—keep all your suspicions concerning me alive, that you may in a proper and prepared way—acquaint me why the care of your daughter obliges a person of your seeming worth and fortune to be thus inquisitive about a wretched, helpless, friendless—[*Weeping.*] But I beg your pardon—tho' I am an orphan, your child is not, and your concern for her, it seems, has brought you hither———I'll be compos'd—pray go on, sir.

Mr. Seal. How could Mr. Bevil be such a monster to injure such a woman?

Ind. No, sir, you wrong him; he has not injured me—my support is from his bounty.

Mr. Seal. Bounty! when gluttons give high prices for delicates, they are prodigious bountiful!

Ind. Still, still you will persist in that error———but

my own fears tell me all. You are the gentleman, I suppose, for whose happy daughter he is design'd a husband by his good father, and he has, perhaps, consented to the overture, and he is to be, perhaps, this night a bridegroom.

Mr. Seal. I own he was intended such; but, madam, on your account, I am determined to defer my daughter's marriage till I am satisfied, from your own mouth, of what nature are the obligations you are under to him.

Ind. His actions, sir, his eyes, have only made me think he design'd to make me the partner of his heart. The goodness and gentleness of his demeanour made me misinterpret all; 'twas my own hope, my own passion, that deluded me; he never made one amorous advance to me; his large heart and bestowing hand have only help'd the miserable: nor know I why, but from his mere delight in virtue, that I have been his care, the object on which to indulge and please himself with pouring favours.

Mr. Seal. Madam, I know not why it is, but I, as well as you, am methinks afraid of entering into the matter I came about; but 'tis the same thing as if we had talk'd ever so distinctly—he ne'er shall have a daughter of mine.

Ind. If you say this from what you think of me, you wrong yourself and him. Let not me, miserable though I may be, do injury to my benefactor: no, sir, my treatment ought rather to reconcile you to his virtues.—If to bestow without a prospect of return,

if to delight in supporting what might, perhaps, be thought an object of desire, with no other view than to be her guard against those who would not be so disinterested, if these actions, sir, can in a careful parent's eye commend him to a daughter, give you's, sir; give her to my honest, generous, Bevil!—What have I to do but sigh, and weep, to rave, run wild, a lunatic in chains, or, hid in darkness, mutter in distracted starts and broken accents my strange, strange story!

Mr. Seal. Take comfort, madam.

Ind. All my comfort must be to expostulate in madness, to relieve with frenzy my despair, and, shrieking, to demand of Fate why, why was I born to such variety of sorrows?

Mr. Seal. If I have been the least occasion——

Ind. No; 'twas Heaven's high will I should be such—to be plunder'd in my cradle, toss'd on the seas, and even there, an infant captive, to lose my mother, hear but of my father—to be adopted, lose my adopter, then plunged again in worse calamities!

Mr. Seal. An infant captive!

Ind. Yet then to find the most charming of mankind once more to set me free from what I thought the last distress, to load me with his services, his bounties, and his favours, to support my very life in a way that stole, at the same time, my very soul itself from me.

Mr. Seal. And has young Bevil been this worthy man?

Ind. Yet then again, this very man to take another without leaving me the right, the pretence, of easing my fond heart with tears?—for oh! I cann't reproach him, tho' the same hand that rais'd me to this height now throws me down the precipice.

Mr. Seal. Dear lady! oh yet one moment's patience; my heart grows full with your affliction! but yet there's something in your story that *promises relief when you least hope it.*

Ind. My portion here is bitterness and sorrow.

Mr. Seal. Do not think so. Pray answer me; does Bevil know your name and family?

Ind. Alas, too well! Oh! could I be any other thing than what I am——I'll tear away all traces of my former self, my little ornaments, the remains of my first state, the hints of what I ought to have been——

[*In her disorder she throws away her bracelet, which* Sealand *takes up, and looks earnestly at it.*

Mr. Seal. Ha! what's this? my eyes are not deceiv'd! it is, it is the same; the very bracelet which I bequeath'd my wife at our last mournful parting.

Ind. What said you, sir? your wife! Whither does my fancy carry me? what means this new felt motion at my heart? And yet again my fortune but deludes me; for if I err not, sir, your name is Sealand; but my lost father's name was——

Mr. Seal. Danvers, was it not?

Ind. What new amazement! that is, indeed, my family.

Mr. Seal. Know then, when my misfortunes drove me to the Indies, for reasons too tedious now to mention, I changed my name of Danvers into Sealand.

Enter ISABELLA.

Isab. If yet there wants an explanation of your wonder, examine well this face—yours, sir, I well remember—Gaze on, and read in me your sister Isabella.

Mr. Seal. My sister!

Isab. But here's a claim more tender yet—your Indiana, sir, your long-lost daughter.

Mr. Seal. Oh, my child, my child!

Ind. All-gracious Heav'n! is it possible! do I embrace my father!

Mr. Seal. And do I hold thee!—These passions are too strong for utterance.—Rise, rise, my child, and give my tears their way—Oh, my sister!

[*Embracing her.*

Isab. Now, dearest niece! "my groundless fears, "my painful cares, no more shall vex thee:" if I have wrong'd thy noble lover with too hard suspicions, my just concern for thee I hope will plead my pardon.

Mr. Seal. Oh! make him then the full amends, and be yourself the messenger of joy: fly this instant—tell him all these wondrous turns of Providence in his favour; tell him I have now a daughter to bestow which he no longer will decline; that this day he still shall be a bridegroom; nor shall a fortune, the

merit which his father seeks, be wanting. Tell him the reward of all his virtues waits on his acceptance. [*Exit* Isabella.] My dearest Indiana!

[*Turns and embraces her.*

Ind. Have I then at last a father's sanction on my love? his bounteous hand to give, and make my heart a present worthy of Bevil's generosity?

Mr. Seal. Oh my child! how are our sorrows past o'erpaid by such a meeting! Tho' I have lost so many years of soft paternal dalliance with thee, yet in one day to find thee thus, and thus bestow thee, in such perfect happiness, is ample, ample reparation! and yet again the merit of thy lover——

Ind. Oh had I spirits left to tell you of his actions; "how strongly filial duty has suppressed his love, and "how concealment still has doubled all his obli-"gation," the pride, the joy of his alliance, sir, would warm your heart, as he has conquered mine.

Mr. Seal. How laudable is love when born of virtue! I burn to embrace him.——

Ind. See, sir, my aunt already has succeeded, and brought him to your wishes.

Enter Isabella *with Sir* John Bevil, Bevil *jun.* *Mrs.* Sealand, Cimberton, Myrtle, *and* Lucinda.

Sir J. B. [*entering.*] Where, where's this scene of wonder!—Mr. Sealand, I congratulate on this occasion our mutual happiness—Your good sister, sir, has with the story of your daughter's fortune fill'd

es with surprise and joy. Now all exceptions are remov'd; my son has now avow'd his love, and turn'd all former jealousies and doubts to approbation, and I am told your goodness has consented to reward him.

Mr. Seal. If, sir, a fortune equal to his father's hopes can make this object worthy his acceptance.

B. jun. I hear your mention, sir, of fortune with pleasure only, as it may prove the means to reconcile the best of fathers to my love; let him be provident, but let me be happy.—My ever destined, my acknowledged wife! [*Embracing* Indiana.

Ind. Wife!—oh! my ever-loved, my lord, my master!—

Sir J. B. I congratulate myself as well as you that I have a son who could, under such disadvantages, discover your great merit.

Mr. Seal. Oh, Sir John, how vain, how weak is human prudence! what care, what foresight, what imagination could contrive such blest events to make our children happy, as Providence in one short hour has laid before us?

Cimb. [*To Mrs.* Sealand.] I am afraid, madam, Mr. Sealand is a little too busy for our affair; if you please we'll take another opportunity.

Mrs. Seal. Let us have patience, sir.

Cimb. But we make Sir Geoffry wait, madam.

Myrt. Oh, sir, I'm not in haste.

[*During this,* Bev. *jun. presents* Lucinda *to* Indiana.

Mr. Seal. But here, here's our general benefactor.

Excellent young man! that could be at once a lover to her beauty, and a parent to her virtue!

B. jun. If you think that an obligation, sir, give me leave to overpay myself in the only instance that can now add to my felicity, by begging you to bestow this lady on Mr. Myrtle.

Mr. Seal. She is his without reserve; I beg he may be sent for.——Mr. Cimberton, notwithstanding you never had my consent, yet there is, since I saw you, another objection to your marriage with my daughter.

Cimb. I hope, sir, your lady has conceal'd nothing from me?

Mr. Seal. Troth, sir, nothing but what was conceal'd from myself; another daughter, who has an undoubted title to half my estate.

Cimb. How, Mr. Sealand! why then, if half Mrs. Lucinda's fortune is gone, you cann't say that any of my estate is settled upon her; I was in treaty for the whole: but if that's not to be come at, to be sure there can be no bargain.—Sir—I have nothing to do but to take my leave of your good lady my cousin, and beg pardon for the trouble I have given this old gentleman.

Myrt. That you have, Mr. Cimberton, with all my heart. [*Discovers himself.*

Omnes. Mr. Myrtle!

Myrt. And I beg pardon of the whole company that I assumed the person of Sir Geoffry only to be present at the danger of this lady's being disposed of, and in her utmost exigence to assert my right to her,

which if her parents will ratify, as they once favour'd my pretensions, no abatement of fortune shall lessen her value to me.

Luc. Generous man!

Mr. Seal. If, sir, you can overlook the injury of being in treaty with one who has meanly left her, as you have generously asserted your right in her, she is yours.

Luc. Mr. Myrtle, though you have ever had my heart, yet now I find I love you more, because I deserve you less,

Mrs. Seal. Well, however, I'm glad the girl's disposed of any way. [*Aside.*

B. jus. Myrtle, no longer rivals now but brothers.

Myrt. Dear Bevil! you are born to triumph over me; but now our competition ceases: I rejoice in the pre-eminence of your virtue, and your alliance adds charms to Lucinda.

Sir J. B. Now ladies and gentlemen, you have set the world a fair example; your happiness is owing to your constancy and merit, and the several difficulties you have struggled with evidently shew

Whate'er the generous mind itself denies
The secret care of Providence supplies. [Exeunt.

EPILOGUE.

Intended to be spoken by INDIANA.

OUR Author, whom entreaties cannot move,
Spite of the dear coquetry that you love,
Swears he'll not frustrate, so he plainly means,
By a loose Epilogue his decent scenes.
Is it not, sirs, hard fate I meet to-day,
To keep me rigid still beyond the play?
And yet I'm sav'd a world of pains that way:
I now can look, I now can move, at ease,
Nor need I torture these poor limbs to please,
Nor with the hand or foot attempt surprize,
Nor wrest my features nor fatigue my eyes.
Bless me! what freakish gambols have I play'd,
What motions try'd and wanton looks betray'd,
Out of pure kindness all I to over-rule
The threaten'd hiss, and screen some scribbling fool.
With more respect I'm entertain'd to-night;
Our Author thinks I can with ease delight:
My artless looks, while modest graces arm,
He says I need but to appear, and charm.
A wife so form'd, by these examples bred,
Pours joy and gladness round the marriage-bed,

Soft source of comfort, kind relief from care,
And 'tis her least perfection to be fair.
The nymph with Indiana's worth who vies,
A nation will behold with Bevil's eyes.

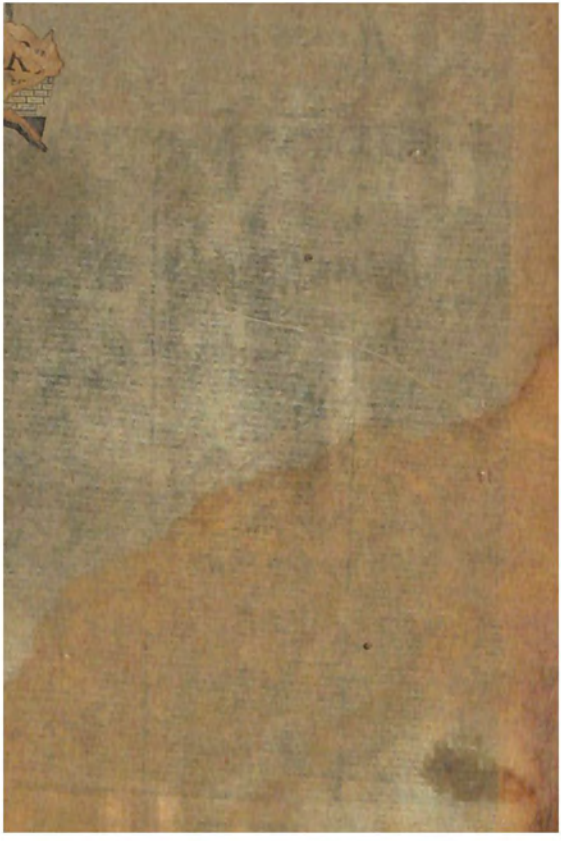
Act III RECRUITING OFFICER. Scene I

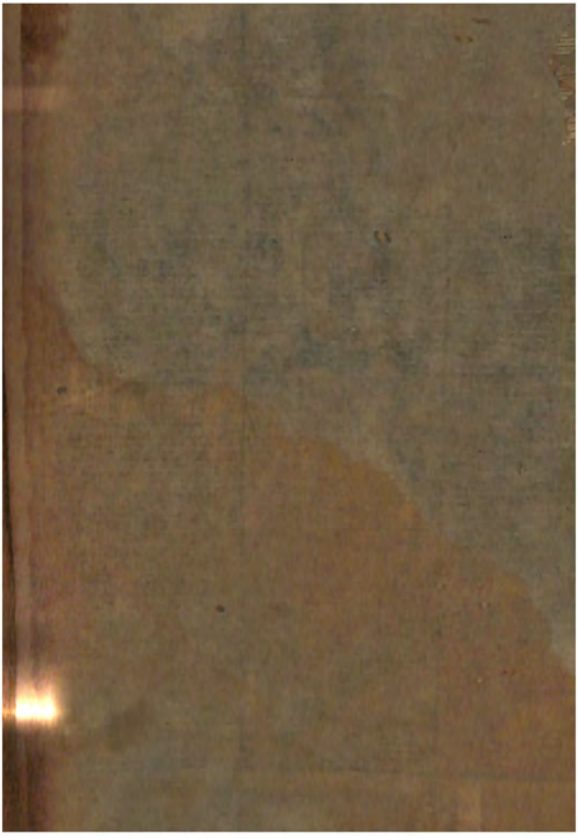
Mr. Wilde pinx.t Anderson sc.

Mrs. MARTYR as ROSE.

Buy Chickens, young and tender Chickens.

London Printed for J. Bell, British Library Strand May 12 1798.





BRIT. THEAT.

THE RECRUITING OFFICER.

Mel. *Tis wonderful my very letters to a little.*
Act 4. Scene 4.

Neagle sculp.

London, Printed for J. Bell, British Library, Strand, May 12. 1792.

THE RECRUITING OFFICER.

A

COMEDY,

BY GEORGE FARQUHAR, ESQ.

ADAPTED FOR

THEATRICAL REPRESENTATION,

AS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRES-ROYAL,
DRURY-LANE AND COVENT-GARDEN.

REGULATED FROM THE PROMPT-BOOKS,

By Permission of the Managers.

LONDON:

Printed for the Proprietors, under the Direction of
JOHN BELL, British Library, STRAND,
Bookseller to His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales.

MDCCXCII.

TO

ALL FRIENDS

ROUND THE WREKIN.

MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

INSTEAD of the mercenary expectations that attend addresses of this nature, I humbly beg that this may be receiv'd as an acknowledgment for the favors you have already conferred; I have transgressed the rules of dedication in offering you any thing in that style without first asking your leave, but the entertainment I found in Shropshire commands me to be grateful, and that's all I intend.

It was my good fortune to be ordered some time ago into the place which is made the scene of this comedy; I was a perfect stranger to every thing in Salop but its character of loyalty, the number of its inhabitants, the alacrity of the gentlemen in recruiting the army, with their generous and hospitable reception of strangers.

This character I found so amply verified in every particular, that you made recruiting, which is the greatest fatigue upon earth to others, to be the greatest pleasure in the world to me.

The kingdom cannot shew better bodies of men, better inclinations for the service, more generosity, more good understanding, nor more politeness, than is to be found at the foot of the Wrekin.

Some little turns of humour that I met with, almost within the shade of that famous hill, gave the rise to this comedy; and people were apprehensive, that, by the example of some others, I would make the town merry at the expence of the country gentlemen; but they forgot that I was to write a comedy, not a libel; and that whilst I held to nature no person of any character in your country could suffer by being exposed. I have drawn the Justice and the Clown in their puris naturalibus; *the one, an apprehensive, sturdy, brave, blockhead, and the other, a worthy, honest, generous, gentleman, hearty in his country's cause, and of as good an understanding as I could give him, which I must confess is far short of his own.*

I humbly beg leave to interline a word or two of the adventures of The Recruiting Officer upon the stage. Mr. Rich, who commands the company for which those recruits were raised, has desired me to acquit him before the world of a charge, which he thinks lies heavy upon him, for acting this play on Mr. Durfey's third night.

Be it known unto all men by these presents, that it was my act and deed, or rather Mr. Durfey's, for he would play his third night against the first of mine. He brought down a huge flight of frightful birds upon me, when (Heaven knows) I had not a feather'd fowl in my play except one single Kite; but I presently made Plume a bird because of his name, and Brazen another because of the feather in his hat; and with these three I engag'd his whole empire, which I think was as great a wonder as any in the sun.

But to answer his complaints more gravely; the season was far advanced, the officers that made the greatest figures in my play were all commanded to their posts abroad, and waited only for a wind, which might possibly turn in less than a day; and I know none of Mr. Durfey's birds that had posts abroad but his Woodcocks, and their season is over: so that he might put off a day with less prejudice than The Recruiting Officer could, who has this farther to say for himself, that he was posted before the other spake, and could not with credit recede from his station.

These and some other rubs this Comedy met with before it appeared: but, on the other hand, it had powerful helps to set it forward: the Duke of Ormond encourag'd the Author, and the Earl of Orrery approved the play. My recruits were reviewed by my general and my colonel, and could not fail to pass

muster; and still to add to my success, they were raised among my Friends round the Wrekin.

This health has the advantage over our other celebrated toasts, never to grow worse for the wearing: it is a lasting beauty, old without age, and common without scandal. That you may live long to set it cheerfully round, and to enjoy the abundant pleasures of your fair and plentiful country, is the hearty wish of,

My Lords and Gentlemen,

your most obliged,

and most obedient servant,

G. FARQUHAR.

THE RECRUITING OFFICER.

THIS is one of the liveliest comedies in our language: it is also the truest picture of the recruiting service that can be given. If tradition may be credited, the character of PLUME was intended by our bard as a portrait of *himself*.

The rival captains are well opposed to each other. The scenes have abundant smartness, ease, and frequently the most exquisite sallies of wit. It is a comedy that will always be popular, while there are rustics to be allured, and these military seducers to inveigle; and probably long after the inhuman juggle shall have ceased, that converts in fancy every bumpkin into a *Marlborough*, the RECRUITING OFFICER of Farquhar will be read as a lively witness of the arts that were once used to induce our clowns to become the soldiers of their country.

PROLOGUE.

IN ancient times, when Helen's fatal charms
Rous'd the contending universe to arms,
The Grecian council happily deputes
The sly Ulysses forth——to raise recruits:
The artful captain found without delay
Where great Achilles a deserter lay;
Him Fate had warn'd to shun the Trojan blows,
Him Greece requir'd——against the Trojan foes.
All their recruiting arts were needful here
To raise this great, this tim'rous volunteer.
Ulysses well could talk——he stirs, he warms,
The warlike youth——He listens to the charms
Of plunder, fine lac'd coats, and glitt'ring arms:
Ulysses caught the young aspiring boy,
And listed him who wrought the fate of Troy.
Thus by Recruiting was bold Hector slain,
Recruiting thus fair Helen did regain.
If for one Helen such prodigious things
Were acted, that they even listed kings,
If for one Helen's artful vicious charms
Half the transported world was found in arms,
What for so many Helens may we dare,
Whose minds as well as faces are so fair?
If by one Helen's eyes old Greece could find
Its Homer fir'd to write, e'en Homer blind,
Then Britons sure beyond compare may write,
That view so many Helens ev'ry night.

Dramatis Personæ.

DRURY-LANE.

Men.

Mr. BALANCE,	*justices,*	Mr. Packer.
Mr. SCALE,		Mr. Fawcett.
Mr. SCRUPLE,		Mr. Maddocks.
Mr. WORTHY,	*a gentleman of Shropshire,*	Mr. Barrymore.
Captain PLUME,	*recruiting officers,*	Mr. Bannister, Jun.
Captain BRAZEN,		Mr. Dodd.
KITE,	*Serjeant to* Captain Plume	Mr. Palmer.
BULLOCK,	*a country clown*	Mr. Moody.
COSTAR PEARMAIN,	*recruits,*	Mr. Parsons.
THOMAS APPLETREE,		Mr. Burton.

Women.

MELINDA,	*a lady of fortune*	Mrs. Ward.
SYLVIA,	*daughter to* Mr. Balance, *in love with* Captain Plume	Mrs. Jordan.
LUCY,	*maid to* Melinda	Mrs. Edwards.
ROSE,	*a country wench*	Miss Pope.

Constable, Recruits, Mob, Servants, and Attendants.

SCENE, Shrewsbury.

Dramatis Personæ.

COVENT-GARDEN.

	Men.
Mr. Balance, Mr. Scale, Mr. Scruple, *justices,*	Mr. Hull. Mr. Reeve. Mr. Powell.
Mr. Worthy, *a gentleman of Shropshire,*	Mr. Davies.
A Gentleman	Mr. Ledger.
Capt. Plume, Capt. Brazen, *recruiting officers*	Mr. Lewis. Mr. Ryder.
Kite, *Serjeant to* Captain Plume	Mr. Cubit.
Bullock, *a country clown*	Mr. Wilson.
Costar Pearmain, Thomas Appletree, *recruits,*	Mr. Bernard. Mr. Blanchard.

	Women.
Melinda, *a lady of fortune*	Mrs. Bernard.
Sylvia, *daughter to* Mr. Balance, *in love with* Captain Plume	Mrs. Pope.
Lucy, *maid to* Melinda	Miss Stuart.
Rose, *a country wench*	Mrs. Wells.

Constable, Recruits, Mob, Servants, and Attendants.

Scene, Shrewsbury.

THE RECRUITING OFFICER.

ACT I. SCENE I.

The Market-Place—Drum beats the Grenadier's March. Enter Serjeant KITE, *followed by* THOMAS APPLETREE, COSTAR PEARMAIN, *and the Mob.*

Kite, making a Speech.

If any gentlemen soldiers or others have a mind to serve his majesty, and pull down the French king; if any 'prentices have severe masters, any children have undutiful parents, if any servants have too little wages, or any husband too much wife, let them repair to the noble Serjeant Kite, at the sign of The Raven, in this good town of Shrewsbury, and they shall receive present relief and entertainment.—Gentlemen, I don't beat my drums here to insnare or inveigle any man; for you must know, gentlemen, that I am a man of honour: besides, I don't beat up for common soldiers; no, I list only grenadiers; grenadiers, gentlemen.——Pray, gentlemen, observe this cap—this

is the cap of honour; it dubs a man a gentleman in the drawing of a trigger; and he that has the good fortune to be born six foot high, was born to be a great man—Sir, will you give me leave to try this cap upon your head?

Cost. Is there no harm in't? won't the cap list me?

Kite. No, no, no more than I can.—Come, let me see how it becomes you.

Cost. Are you sure there be no conjuration in it? no gunpowder plot upon me?

Kite. No, no, friend; don't fear, man.

Cost. My mind misgives me plaguily.—Let me see it—[*Going to put it on.*] It smells woundily of sweat and brimstone. Smell Tummas.

Tho. Ay, wauns does it.

Cost. Pray, serjeant, what writing is this upon the face of it?

Kite. The crown, or the bed of honour.

Cost. Pray now, what may be that same bed of honour?

Kite. Oh! a mighty large bed! bigger by half than the great bed at Ware—ten thousand people may lie in it together and never feel one another.

Cost. My wife and I would do well to lie in't, for we don't care for feeling one another.——But do folk sleep sound in this same bed of honour?

Kite. Sound! ay, so sound that they never wake.

Cost. Wauns! I wish again that my wife lay there.

Kite. Say you so! then I find, brother———

Cost. Brother! hold there friend; I am no kindred

to you that I know of yet.—Look ye, serjeant, no coaxing, no wheedling, d'ye see—if I have a mind to list, why so—if not, why 'tis not so—therefore take your cap and your brothership back again, for I am not disposed at this present writing.—No coaxing, no brothering me, faith!

Kite. I coax! I wheedle! I'm above it, Sir: I have serv'd twenty campaigns——but, Sir, you talk well, and I must own that you are a man, every inch of you; a pretty, young, sprightly fellow!—I love a fellow with a spirit; but I scorn to coax; 'tis base; tho' I must say that never in my life have I seen a man better built. How firm and strong he treads! he steps like a castle! but I scorn to wheedle any man—Come, honest lad! will you take share of a pot?

Cost. Nay, for that matter, I'll spend my penny with the best he that wears a head, that is, begging your pardon, Sir, and in a fair way.

Kite. Give me your hand, then; and now, gentlemen, I have no more to say but this—here's a purse of gold, and there is a tub of humming ale at my quarters—'tis the king's money, and the king's drink—he's a generous king, and loves his subjects—I hope, gentlemen, you won't refuse the king's health.

All Mob. No, no, no.

Kite. Huzza then! huzza for the king and the honour of Shropshire.

All Mob. Huzza!

Kite. Beat drum.

[*Exeunt shouting, drum beating a Grenadier's march.*

Enter PLUME *in a riding habit.*

Plume. By the grenadier's march that should be my drum, and by that shout it should beat with success.—Let me see—four o'clock—[*Looking on his watch.*] At ten yesterday morning I left London—an hundred and twenty miles in thirty hours is pretty smart riding, but nothing to the fatigue of recruiting.

Enter KITE.

Kite. Welcome to Shrewsbury, noble captain! from the banks of the Danube to the Severn side, noble captain! you're welcome.

Plume. A very elegant reception, indeed, Mr. Kite. I find you are fairly enter'd into your recruiting strain—Pray what success?

Kite. I've been here a week, and I've recruited five.

Plume. Five! pray what are they?

Kite. I have listed the strong man of Kent, the king of the gipsies, a Scotch pedlar, a scoundrel attorney, and a Welch parson.

Plume. An attorney! wert thou mad? list a lawyer! discharge him, discharge him, this minute.

Kite. Why, Sir?

Plume. Because I will have nobody in my company that can write; a fellow that can write can draw petitions—I say this minute discharge him.

Kite. And what shall I do with the parson?

Plume. Can he write?

Kite. Hum! he plays rarely upon the fiddle.

Plume. Keep him, by all means—But how stands the country affected? were the people pleas'd with the news of my coming to town?

Kite. Sir, the mob are so pleased with your honour, and the justices and better sort of people are so delighted with me, that we shall soon do your business ——But, Sir, you have got a recruit here, that you little think of.

Plume. Who?

Kite. One that you beat up for the last time you were in the country. You remember your old friend Molly at The Castle?

Plume. She's not with child, I hope.

Kite. She was brought to-bed yesterday.

Plume. Kite, you must father the child.

Kite. And so her friends will oblige me to marry the mother.

Plume. If they should, we'll take her with us; she can wash, you know, and make a bed upon occasion.

Kite. Ay, or unmake it upon occasion. But your honour knows that I am married already.

Plume. To how many?

Kite. I can't tell readily—I have set them down here upon the back of the muster-roll. [*Draws it out.*] Let me see—*Imprimis*, Mrs. Shely Snikereyes; she sells potatoes upon Ormond key in Dublin—Peggy Guzzle, the brandy woman at the Horse-Guards at Whitehall—Dolly Waggon, the carrier's daughter at Hull—Madamoiselle Van Bottomflat at the Buss—then Jenny

Oakum, the ship-carpenter's widow at Portsmouth; but I don't reckon upon her, for she was married at the same time to two lieutenants of marines and a man of war's boatswain.

Plume. A full company—you have named five—come, make them half-a-dozen—Kite, is the child a boy or a girl?

Kite. A chopping boy.

Plume. Then set the mother down in your list, and the boy in mine; enter him a grenadier by the name of Francis Kite, absent upon furlow—I'll allow you a man's pay for his subsistence; and now, go comfort the wench in the straw.

Kite. I shall, Sir.

Plume. But hold, have you made any use of your German doctor's habit since you arriv'd?

Kite. Yes, yes, Sir, and my fame's all about the country for the most faithful fortune-teller that ever told a lie—I was obliged to let my landlord into the secret for the convenience of keeping it so; but he is an honest fellow, and will be faithful to any roguery that is trusted to him. This device, Sir, will get you men and my money, which I think is all we want at present—But yonder comes your friend, Mr. Worthy, —Has your honour any farther commands?

Plume. None at present. [*Exit Kite.*] 'Tis indeed the picture of Worthy, but the life's departed.

Enter WORTHY.

What, arms across, Worthy! methinks you should

hold them open when a friend's so near—The man has got the vapours in his ears, I believe. I must expel this melancholy spirit.

Spleen, thou worst of fiends below,
Fly, I conjure thee, by this magic blow.

[*Slaps* Worthy *on the shoulder.*

Wor. Plume! my dear captain! welcome. Safe and sound return'd!

Plume. I 'scaped safe from Germany, and sound, I hope, from London: you see I have lost neither leg, arm, nor nose. Then for my inside, 'tis neither troubled with sympathies nor antipathies; and I have an excellent stomach for roast beef.

Wor. Thou art a happy fellow: once I was so.

Plume. What ails thee, man? no inundations nor earthquakes in Wales I hope? Has your father rose from the dead and reassumed his estate?

Wor. No.

Plume. Then you are marry'd, surely?

Wor. No.

Plume. Then you are mad, or turning quaker?

Wor. Come, I must out with it——Your once gay roving friend is dwindled into an obsequious, thoughtful, romantic, constant coxcomb.

Plume. And, pray, what is all this for?

Wor. For a woman.

Plume. Shake hands, brother. If thou go to that, behold me as obsequious, as thoughtful, and as constant a coxcomb as your worship.

Wor. For whom?

Plume. For a regiment—but for a woman! 'Sdeath! I have been constant to fifteen at a time, but never melancholy for one: and can the love of one bring you into this condition? Pray, who is this wonderful Helen?

Wor. A Helen indeed! not to be won under ten years siege; as great a beauty, and as great a jilt.

Plume. A jilt! pho! is she as great a whore?

Wor. No, no.

Plume. 'Tis ten thousand pities! But who is she? do I know her?

Wor. Very well.

Plume. That's impossible——I know no woman that will hold out a ten years siege.

Wor. What think you of Melinda?

Plume. Melinda! why she began to capitulate this time twelvemonth, and offered to surrender upon honourable terms: and I advis'd you to propose a settlement of five hundred pounds a-year to her, before I went last abroad.

Wor. I did, and she hearken'd to it, desiring only one week to consider——when beyond her hopes the town was reliev'd, and I forc'd to turn my siege into a blockade.

Plume. Explain, explain.

Wor. My lady Richly, her aunt in Flintshire, dies, and leaves her, at this critical time, twenty thousand pounds.

Plume. Oh, the devil! what a delicate woman was there spoil'd! But, by the rules of war, now——

Worthy, blockade was foolish—After such a convoy of provisions was enter'd the place, you could have no thought of reducing it by famine; you should have redoubled your attacks, taken the town by storm, or have died upon the breach.

Wor. I did make one general assault, but was so vigorously repuls'd, that, despairing of ever gaining her for a mistress, I have alter'd my conduct, given my addresses the obsequious and distant turn, and court her now for a wife.

Plume. So, as you grew obsequious she grew haughty, and, because you approached her like a goddess, she us'd you like a dog.

Wor. Exactly.

Plume. 'Tis the way of 'em all——Come, Worthy, your obsequious and distant airs will never bring you together; you must not think to surmount her pride by your humility. Wou'd you bring her to better thoughts of you, she must be reduc'd to a meaner opinion of herself. Let me see, the very first thing that I would do should be to lie with her chambermaid, and hire three or four wenches in the neighbourhood to report that I had got them with child ——Suppose we lampoon'd all the pretty women in town and left her out; or, what if we made a ball, and forgot to invite her, with one or two of the ugliest.

Wor. These would be mortifications I must confess; but we live in such a precise, dull place that we can have no balls, no lampoons, no——

Plume. What! no bastards! and so many Recruiting Officers in town! I thought 'twas a maxim among them to leave as many recruits in the country as they carry'd out.

Wor. Nobody doubts your good-will, noble captain! in serving your country with your best blood, witness our friend Molly at The Castle; there have been tears in town about that business, captain.

Plume. I hope Sylvia has not heard of it.

Wor. Oh, Sir, have you thought of her? I began to fancy you had forgot poor Sylvia.

Plume. Your affairs had quite put mine out of my head. 'Tis true, Sylvia and I had once agreed to go to bed together, could we have adjusted preliminaries; but she would have the wedding before consummation, and I was for consummation before the wedding: we could not agree. She was a pert obstinate fool, and would lose her maidenhead her own way, so she might keep it for Plume.

Wor. But do you intend to marry upon no other conditions?

Plume. Your pardon, Sir, I'll marry upon no condition at all.—If I should, I am resolv'd never to bind myself down to a woman for my whole life, till I know whether I shall like her company for half an hour. Suppose I marry'd a woman that wanted a leg—such a thing might be, unless I examined the goods beforehand —— If people would but try one another's constitutions before they engag'd, it would prevent

all these elopements, divorces, and the devil knows what.

Wor. Nay, for that matter, the town did not stick to say that——

Plume. I hate country towns for that reason—If your town has a dishonourable thought of Sylvia, it deserves to be burnt to the ground—I love Sylvia, I admire her frank generous disposition—there's something in that girl more than woman—" her sex is but " a foil to her—the ingratitude, dissimulation, envy, " pride, avarice, and vanity, of her sister females, " do but set off their contraries in her"—In short, were I once a general, I wou'd marry her.

Wor. Faith, you have reason—for were you but a corporal, she would marry you—But my Melinda coquets it with every fellow she sees—I'll lay fifty pounds she makes love to you.

Plume. I'll lay you a hundred, that I return it if she does.—Look'e, Worthy, I'll win her and give her to you afterwards.

Wor. If you win her you shall wear her, faith; I would not value the conquest without the credit of the victory.

Enter KITE.

Kite. Captain, Captain! a word in your ear.

Plume. You may speak out, here are none but friends.

Kite. You know, Sir, that you sent me to comfort

the good woman in the straw, Mrs. Molly—my wife, Mr. Worthy.

Wor. O ho! very well. I wish you joy, Mr. Kite.

Kite. Your worship very well may—for I have got both a wife and a child in half an hour—But as I was saying—you sent me to comfort Mrs. Molly—my wife, I mean—but what d'ye think, Sir? she was better comforted before I came.

Plume. As how?

Kite. Why, Sir, a footman in a blue livery had brought her ten guineas to buy her baby-clothes.

Plume. Who, in the name of wonder, could send them?

Kite. Nay, Sir, I must whisper that—Mrs. Sylvia.

Plume. Sylvia! generous creature!

Wor. Sylvia! impossible!

Kite. Here are the guineas, Sir—I took the gold as part of my wife's portion. Nay, farther, Sir, she sent word the child should be taken all imaginable care of, and that she intended to stand godmother. The same footman, as I was coming to you with this news, call'd after me, and told me, that his lady would speak with me—I went, and upon hearing that you were come to town, she gave me half-a-guinea for the news, and ordered me to tell you, that Justice Balance, her father, who is just come out of the country, would be glad to see you.

Plume. There's a girl for you, Worthy—Is there any thing of woman in this? no, 'tis noble, generous, manly, friendship. Shew me another woman that

would lose an inch of her prerogative that way, without tears, fits, and reproaches. The common jealousy of her sex, which is nothing but their avarice of pleasure, she despises, and can part with the lover though she dies for the man—Come, Worthy—where's the best wine? for there I'll quarter.

Wor. Horton has a fresh pipe of choice Barcelona, which I would not let him pierce before, because I reserv'd the maidenhead of it for your welcome to town.

Plume. Let's away, then—Mr. Kite, go to the lady with my humble service, and tell her, I shall only refresh a little and wait upon her.

Wor. Hold, Kite—have you seen the other recruiting captain?

Kite. No, Sir; I'd have you to know I don't keep such company.

Plume. Another! who is he?

Wor. My rival, in the first place, and the most unaccountable fellow—but I'll tell you more as we go.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

An Apartment. MELINDA *and* SYLVIA *meeting.*

Mel. Welcome to town, cousin Sylvia. [*Salute.*] I envy'd you your retreat in the country; for Shrewsbury, methinks, and all your heads of shires, are the most irregular places for living: here we have smoke,

scandal, affectation, and pretension; in short, every thing to give the spleen—and nothing to divert it—then the air is intolerable.

Syl. Oh, Madam! I have heard the town commended for its air.

Mel. But you don't consider, Sylvia, how long I have lived in it; for I can assure you that to a lady the least nice in her constitution—no air can be good above half a year. Change of air I take to be the most agreeable of any variety in life.

Syl. As you say, cousin Melinda, there are several sorts of airs.

Mel. Psha! I talk only of the air we breathe, or more properly of that we taste—Have not you, Sylvia, found a vast difference in the taste of airs?

Syl. Pray, cousin, are not vapours a sort of air? Taste air! you might as well tell me I may feed upon air! but prithee, my dear Melinda! don't put on such an air to me. Your education and mine were just the same, and I remember the time when we never troubled our heads about air, but when the sharp air from the Welch mountains made our fingers ach in a cold morning at the boarding-school.

Mel. Our education, cousin, was the same, but our temperaments had nothing alike; you have the constitution of an horse.

Syl. So far as to be troubled neither with spleen, cholic, nor vapours. I need no salts for my stomach, no hartshorn for my head, nor wash for my complexion; I can gallop all the morning after the hunting-

horn, and all the evening after a fiddle. In short, I can do every thing with my father, but drink and shoot flying, and I am sure I can do every thing my mother could, were I put to the trial.

Mel. You are in a fair way of being put to't, for I am told your captain is come to town.

Syl. Ay, Melinda, he is come, and I'll take care he sha'n't go without a companion.

Mel. You are certainly mad, cousin.

Syl. ——" *And there's a pleasure in being mad*
" *Which none but madmen know.*"

Mel. Thou poor romantic Quixote!—hast thou the vanity to imagine that a young, sprightly officer, that rambles o'er half the globe in half a year, can confine his thoughts to the little daughter of a country justice in an obscure part of the world?

Syl. Psha! what care I for his thoughts; I should not like a man with confin'd thoughts; it shews a narrowness of soul. " Constancy is but a dull sleepy " quality at best; they will hardly admit it among the " manly virtues, nor do I think it deserves a place " with bravery, knowledge, policy, justice, and some " other qualities that are proper for that noble sex." In short, Melinda, I think a petticoat a mighty simple thing, and I am heartily tired of my sex.

Mel. That is, you are tir'd of an appendix to our sex, that you can't so handsomely get rid of in petticoats as if you were in breeches.—O' my conscience, Sylvia, hadst thou been a man thou hadst been the greatest rake in Christendom.

Syl. I should have endeavoured to know the world, which a man can never do thoroughly without half a hundred friendships and as many amours. But now I think on't, how stands your affair with Mr. Worthy?

Mel. He's my aversion.

Syl. Vapours!

Mel. What do you say, Madam?

Syl. I say that you should not use that honest fellow so inhumanly: he's a gentleman of parts and fortune, and besides that, he's my Plume's friend; and by all that's sacred, if you don't use him better, I shall expect satisfaction.

Mel. Satisfaction! you begin to fancy yourself in breeches in good earnest—But, to be plain with you, I like Worthy the worse for being so intimate with your captain, for I take him to be a loose, idle, unmannerly coxcomb.

Syl. Oh, Madam! you never saw him, perhaps, since you were mistress of twenty thousand pounds: you only knew him when you were capitulating with Worthy for a settlement, which perhaps might encourage him to be a little loose and unmannerly with you.

Mel. What do you mean, Madam?

Syl. My meaning needs no interpretation, Madam.

Mel. Better it had, Madam, for methinks you are too plain.

Syl. If you mean the plainness of my person, I think your ladyship's as plain as me to the full.

Mel. Were I sure of that, I would be glad to take up with a rakehelly officer, as you do.

Syl. Again! look'e, Madam, you are in your own house.

Mel. And if you had kept in yours, I should have excused you.

Syl. Don't be troubled, Madam, I sha'n't desire to have my visit return'd.

Mel. The sooner therefore you make an end of this the better.

Syl. I am easily persuaded to follow my inclinations; and so, Madam, your humble servant. [*Exit.*

Mel. Saucy thing!

Enter LUCY.

Lucy. What's the matter, Madam?

Mel. Did not you see the proud nothing, how she swell'd upon the arrival of her fellow?

Lucy. Her fellow has not been long enough arriv'd to occasion any great swelling, Madam; I don't believe she has seen him yet.

Mel. Nor sha'n't, if I can help it—Let me see—I have it—bring me pen and ink—Hold, I'll go write in my closet.

Lucy. An answer to this letter I hope, Madam? [*Presents a letter.*

Mel. Who sent it?

Lucy. Your captain, Madam.

Mel. He's a fool, and I'm tir'd of him: send it back unopen'd.

Lucy. The messenger's gone, Madam.

Mel. Then how shou'd I send an answer? Call him back immediately while I go write. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II. SCENE I.

An Apartment. Enter Justice BALANCE *and* PLUME.

Balance.

LOOK'E, Captain, give us but blood for our money, and you sha'n't want men. "I remember that for some "years of the last war we had no blood, no wounds, "but in the officers' mouths; nothing for our millions "but news-papers not worth a reading—Our army "did nothing but play at prisonbars, and hide and "seek with the enemy; but now ye have brought us "colours, and standards, and prisoners—Ad's my "life, captain, get us but another marshal of France, "and I'll go myself for a soldier."

Plume. Pray, Mr. Balance, how does your fair daughter?

Bal. Ah, Captain! what is my daughter to a marshal of France! we're upon a nobler subject; I want to have a particular description of the battle of Hockstet.

Plume. The battle, Sir, was a very pretty battle as any one should desire to see, but we were all so intent upon victory that we never minded the battle: all that I know of the matter is, our general commanded us

to beat the French, and we did so; and, if he pleases but to say the word, we'll do it again. But pray, Sir, how does Mrs. Sylvia?

Bal. Still upon Sylvia! for shame, captain! you are engaged already, wedded to the war; Victory is your mistress, and 'tis below a soldier to think of any other.

Plume. As a mistress, I confess, but as a friend, Mr. Balance———

Bal. Come, come, captain, never mince the matter; would not you debauch my daughter if you could?

Plume. How, Sir! I hope she is not to be debauch'd.

Bal. Faith, but she is, Sir, and any woman in England of her age and complexion by your youth and vigour. Look'e, captain, once I was young, and once an officer, as you are, and I can guess at your thoughts now by what mine were then; and I remember very well that I would have given one of my legs to have deluded the daughter of an old country gentleman like me, as I was then like you.

Plume. But, Sir, was that country gentleman your friend and benefactor?

Bal. Not much of that.

Plume. There the comparison breaks: the favours, Sir, that———

Bal. Pho, pho! I hate set speeches: if I have done you any service, captain, it was to please myself. I love thee, and if I could part with my girl, you should have her as soon as any young fellow I know; but I

hope you have more honour than to quit the service, and she more prudence than to follow the camp; but she's at her own disposal; she has fifteen hundred pounds in her pocket, and so—Sylvia, Sylvia!

[*Calls.*

Enter SYLVIA.

Syl. There are some letters, Sir, come by the post from London; I left them upon the table in your closet.

Bal. And here is a gentleman from Germany. [*Presents* Plume *to her.*] Captain, you'll excuse me; I'll go read my letters, and wait on you. [*Exit.*

Syl. Sir, you are welcome to England.

Plume. You are indebted to me a welcome, Madam, since the hopes of receiving it from this fair hand was the principal cause of my seeing England.

Syl. I have often heard that soldiers were sincere; may I venture to believe public report?

Plume. You may, when 'tis back'd by private insurance; for I swear, Madam, by the honour of my profession, that whatever dangers I went upon, it was with the hope of making myself more worthy of your esteem; and if ever I had thoughts of preserving my life, 'twas for the pleasure of dying at your feet.

Syl. Well, well, you shall die at my feet, or where you will; but you know, Sir, there is a certain will and testament to be made beforehand.

Plume. My will, Madam, is made already, and there it is; and if you please to open that parchment,

which was drawn the evening before the battle of Hockstet, you will find whom I left my heir.

Syl. Mrs. Sylvia Balance.—[*Opens the will and reads.*] Well, Captain, this is a handsome and a substantial compliment; but I can assure you I am much better pleased with the bare knowledge of your intention, than I should have been in the possession of your legacy: but, methinks, Sir, you should have left something to your little boy at The Castle.

Plume. That's home. [*Aside.*] My little boy! lack-a-day, Madam! that alone may convince you 'twas none of mine: why, the girl, Madam, is my serjeant's wife, and so the poor creature gave out that I was the father, in hopes that my friends might support her in case of necessity—That was all, Madam—My boy! no, no, no!

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Madam, my master has receiv'd some ill news from London, and desires to speak with you immediately, and he begs the captain's pardon that he can't wait on him as he promised.

Plume. Ill news! Heavens avert it! nothing could touch me nearer than to see that generous, worthy gentleman afflicted. I'll leave you to comfort him, and be assured that if my life and fortune can be any way serviceable to the father of my Sylvia, he shall freely command both.

Syl. The necessity must be very pressing that would engage me to endanger either. [*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE II.

Another Apartment. Enter BALANCE *and* SYLVIA.

Syl. Whilst there is life there is hope, Sir; perhaps my brother may recover.

Bal. We have but little reason to expect it; the doctor "Kilman" acquaints me here, that before this comes to my hands he fears I shall have no son—Poor Owen!—but the decree is just; I was pleased with the death of my father because he left me an estate, and now I am punish'd with the loss of an heir to inherit mine. I must now look upon you as the only hopes of my family, and I expect that the augmentation of your fortune will give you fresh thoughts and new prospects.

Syl. My desire in being punctual to my obedience, requires that you would be plain in your commands, Sir.

Bal. The death of your brother makes you sole heiress to my estate, which you know is about twelve hundred pounds a-year: this fortune gives you a fair claim to quality and a title: you must set a just value upon yourself, and, in plain terms, think no more of Captain Plume.

Syl. You have often commended the gentleman, Sir.

Bal. And I do so still; he's a very pretty fellow; but though I like'd him well enough for a bare son-in-law, I don't approve of him for an heir to my estate and family: fifteen hundred pounds indeed I might

trust in his hands, and it might do the young fellow a kindness; but—od's my life! twelve hundred pounds a-year would ruin him, quite turn his brain—A Captain of foot worth twelve hundred pounds a-year! his prodigy in nature! "Besides, this, I "have five or six thousand pounds in woods upon my "estate; oh! that would make him stark mad; for "you must know that all captains have a mighty aver-"sion to timber; they can't endure to see trees stand-"ing. Then I should have some rogue of a builder, "by the help of his damn'd magic art, transform my "noble oaks and elms into cornices, portals, sashes, "birds, beasts, and devils, to adorn some maggotty "new-fashion'd bauble upon the Thames; and then "you should have a dog of a gard'ner bring a *habeas* "*corpus* upon my *terra firma*, remove it to Chelsea or "Twickenham, and clap it into grass-plots and gra-"vel walks."

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Sir, here's one with a letter below for your worship, but he will deliver it into no hands but your own.

Bal. Come, shew me the messenger.

[*Exit with Servant.*

Syl. Make the dispute between love and duty, and I am prince Prettyman exactly—If my brother dies, ah, poor brother! if he lives, ah, poor sister! It is bad both ways. I'll try it again—Follow my own inclinations and break my father's heart, or obey his commands and break my own? Worse and worse.

Suppose I take it thus: A moderate fortune, a pretty fellow, and a pad; or, a fine estate, a coach-and-six, and an ass—That will never do neither.

Enter BALANCE *and a Servant.*

Bal. Put four horses to the coach. [*To a Servant, who goes out.*] Ho, Sylvia!

Syl. Sir.

Bal. How old were you when your mother dy'd?

Syl. So young that I don't remember I ever had one, and you have been so careful, so indulgent, to me since, that indeed I never wanted one.

Bal. Have I ever denied you any thing you ask'd of me?

Syl. Never that I remember.

Bal. Then, Sylvia, I must beg that once in your life you would grant me a favour.

Syl. Why should you question it, Sir?

Bal. I don't, but I would rather counsel than command. I don't propose this with the authority of a parent, but as the advice of your friend, that you would take the coach this moment and go into the country.

Syl. Does this advice, Sir, proceed from the contents of the letter you receiv'd just now?

Bal. No matter; I will be with you in three or four days, and then give you my reasons—but before you go I expect you will make me one solemn promise.

Syl. Propose the thing, Sir.

Bal. That you will never dispose of yourself to any man without my consent.

Syl. I promise.

Bal. Very well; and to be even with you, I promise I never will dispose of you without your own consent: and so, Sylvia, the coach is ready. Farewell. [*Leads her to the door and returns.*] Now she's gone, I'll examine the contents of this letter a little nearer.

[*Reads.*

"SIR,

"My intimacy with Mr. Worthy has drawn a secret from him that he had from his friend captain "Plume, and my friendship and relation to your "family oblige me to give you timely notice of it. "The captain has dishonourable designs upon my "cousin Sylvia. Evils of this nature are more easily prevented than amended; and that you would "immediately send my cousin into the country is the "advice of,

"Sir, your humble servant, Melinda."

Why, the devil's in the young fellows of this age; they are ten times worse than they were in my time: had he made my daughter a whore, and forswore it like a gentleman, I could almost have pardon'd it, but to tell tales beforehand is monstrous.—Hang it! I can fetch down a woodcock or a snipe, and why not a hat and cockade? I have a case of good pistols, and have a good mind to try.

Enter WORTHY.

Worthy! your servant.

Wor. I'm sorry, Sir, to be the messenger of ill news.

Bal. I apprehend it, Sir; you have heard that my son Owen is past recovery.

Wor. My letters say he's dead, Sir.

Bal. He's happy, and I am satisfied: the stroke of Heav'n I can bear; but injuries from men, Mr. Worthy, are not so easily supported.

Wor. I hope, Sir, you're under no apprehensions of wrong from any body.

Bal. You know I ought to be.

Wor. You wrong my honour in believing I could know any thing to your prejudice without resenting it as much as you should.

Bal. This letter, Sir, which I tear in pieces to conceal the person that sent it, informs me that Plume has a design upon Sylvia, and that you are privy to't.

Wor. Nay then, Sir, I must do myself justice, and endeavour to find out the author. [*Takes up a bit.*] Sir, I know the hand, and if you refuse to discover the contents, Melinda shall tell me. [*Going.*

Bal. Hold, Sir, the contents I have told you already, only with this circumstance, that her intimacy with Mr. Worthy had drawn the secret from him.

Wor. Her intimacy with me! Dear Sir! let me pick up the pieces of this letter, 'twill give me such a power over her pride to have her own an intimacy

under her hand—This was the luckiest accident! [*Gathering up the letter.*] The aspersion, Sir, was nothing but malice, the effect of a little quarrel between her and Mrs. Sylvia.

Bal. Are you sure of that, Sir?

Wor. Her maid gave me the history of part of the battle just now as she overheard it: but I hope, Sir, your daughter has suffered nothing upon the account.

Bal. No, no, poor girl; she's so afflicted with the news of her brother's death, that to avoid company she begg'd leave to go into the country.

Wor. And is she gone?

Bal. I could not refuse her, she was so pressing; the coach went from the door the minute before you came.

Wor. So pressing to be gone, Sir?—I find her fortune will give her the same airs with Melinda, and then Plume and I may laugh at one another.

Bal. Like enough; women are as subject to pride as men are; and why may'nt great women as well as great men forget their old acquaintance?—But come, where's this young fellow? I love him so well, it would break the heart of me to think him a rascal—I am glad my daughter's gone fairly off tho'. [*Aside.*] Where does the captain quarter?

Wor. At Horton's; I am to meet him there two hours hence, and we should be glad of your company.

Bal. Your pardon, dear Worthy! I must allow a day or two to the death of my son. "The decorum

" of mourning is what we owe the world because they " pay it to us;" afterwards I'm yours over a bottle, or how you will.

Wor. Sir, I'm your humble servant. [*Exeunt apart.*

SCENE III.

The Street. Enter KITE, *with* COSTAR PEARMAIN *in one hand, and* THOMAS APPLETREE *in the other, drunk.*

KITE sings.

Our 'prentice Tom may now refuse
To wipe his scoundrel master's shoes,
For now he's free to sing and play
Over the hills and far away.——Over, &c.

[The Mob sing the chorus.

We shall lead more happy lives
By getting rid of brats and wives
That scold and brawl both night and day,
Over the hills and far away.——Over, &c.

Kite. Hey, boys! thus we soldiers live! drink, sing, dance, play—we live, as one should say—we live—'tis impossible to tell how we live—we are all princes—why—why, you are a king—you are an emperor, and I'm a prince—now—an't we?

Tho. No, serjeant, I'll be no emperor.

Kite. No!

Tho. I'll be a justice of peace.

Kite. A justice of peace, man!

Tho. Ay, wauns will I; for since this pressing act, they are greater than any emperor under the sun.

Kite. Done; you are a justice of peace, and you are a king, and I am a duke, and a rum duke, an't I?

Cost. Ay, but I'll be no king.

Kite. What then!

Cost. I'll be a queen.

Kite. A queen!

Cost. Ay, of England, that's greater than any king of 'em all.

Kite. Bravely said, faith! huzza for the queen. [*Huzza.*] But hark'e, you Mr. Justice, and you Mr. Queen, did you ever see the king's picture?

Both. No, no, no.

Kite. I wonder at that; I have two of 'em set in gold, and as like his majesty, God bless the mark! see here, they are set in gold.

[*Takes two broad pieces out of his pocket, presents one to each.*

Tho. The wonderful works of nature!

[*Looking at it.*

Cost. What's this written about? here's a posy, I believe. Ca-ro-lus!—what's that, Serjeant?

Kite. O! Carolus! why, Carolus is Latin for king George; that's all.

Cost. 'Tis a fine thing to be a scollard—Serjeant,

will you part with this? I'll buy it on you if it come within the compass of a crown.

Kite. A crown! never talk of buying; 'tis the same thing among friends, you know; I'll present them to ye both: you shall give me as good a thing. Put 'em up, and remember your old friend when I am over the hills and far away.

[*They sing, and put up the money.*

Enter PLUME, singing.

Over the hills and over the main,
To Flanders, Portugal, or Spain;
The king commands and we'll obey,
Over the hills and far away.

Come on my men of mirth, away with it; I'll make one among ye. Who are these hearty lads?

Kite. Off with your hats; 'ounds! off with your hats: this is the captain, the captain.

Tho. We have seen captains afore now, mun.

Cost. Ay, and lieutenant-captains too. 'Sflesh! I'll keep on my nab.

Tho. And I'se scarcely d'off mine for any captain in England. My vether's a freeholder.

Plume. Who are those jolly lads, serjeant?

Kite. A couple of honest brave fellows that are willing to serve the king: I have entertain'd 'em just now as volunteers under your honour's command.

Plume. And good entertainment they shall have:

volunteers are the men I want; those are the men fit to make soldiers, captains, generals.

Cost. Wounds Tummas, what's this! are you listed?

Tho. Flesh! not I: are you Costar?

Cost. Wounds! not I.

Kite. What! not listed! ha, ha, ha! a very good jest, i'faith.

Cost. Come, Tummas, we'll go home.

Tho. Ay, ay, come.

Kite. Home! for shame, gentlemen; behave yourselves better before your captain. Dear Tummas, honest Costar!

Tho. No, no, we'll be gone.

Kite. Nay, then, I command you to stay: I place you both centinels in this place for two hours, to watch the motion of St Mary's clock you, and you the motion of St. Chad's; and he that dares stir from his post till he be relieved, shall have my sword in his guts the next minute.

Plume. What's the matter, serjeant? I'm afraid you are too rough with these gentlemen.

Kite. I'm too mild, Sir; they disobey command, Sir, and one of 'em should be shot for an example to the other.

Cost. Shot! Tummas?

Plume. Come, gentlemen, what's the matter?

Tho. We don't know; the noble serjeant is pleas'd to be in a passion, Sir—but—

Kite. They disobey command; they deny their being listed.

Tho. Nay, serjeant, we don't downright deny it, neither; that we dare not do for fear of being shot; but we humbly conceive, in a civil way, and begging your worship's pardon, that we may go home.

Plume. That's easily known. Have either of you receiv'd any of the king's money?

Cost. Not a brass farthing, Sir.

Kite. They have each of them receiv'd one-and-twenty shillings, and 'tis now in their pockets.

Cost. Wounds! if I have a penny in my pocket but a bent six-pence, I'll be content to be listed and shot into the bargain.

Tho. And I: look ye here, Sir.

Cost. Nothing but the king's picture that the serjeant gave me just now.

Kite. See there, a guinea, one-and-twenty shillings; t' other has the fellow on't.

Plume. The case is plain, gentlemen; the goods are found upon you: those pieces of gold are worth one-and-twenty shillings each.

Cost. So it seems that Carolus is one-and-twenty shillings in Latin.

Tho. 'Tis the same thing in Greek, for we are listed.

Cost. Flesh! but we an't Tummas: I desire to be carried before the mayor, captain.

[*Captain and serjeant whisper the while.*

Plume. 'Twill never do, Kite—your damn'd tricks will ruin me at last—I won't lose the fellows, though, if I can help it—Well, gentlemen, there must be some

trick in this; my serjeant offers to take his oath that you are fairly listed.

Tho. Why, captain, we know that you soldiers have more liberty of conscience than other folks; but for me or neighbour Costar here to take such an oath 'twould be downright perjuration.

Plume. Look'e, rascal, you villain! If I find that you have impos'd upon these two honest fellows, I'll trample you to death, you dog—Come, how was't?

Tho. Nay then we'll speak. Your serjeant, as you say, is a rogue, an't like your worship, begging your worship's pardon—and—

Cost. Nay, Tummas, let me speak, you know I can read.——And so, Sir, he gave us those two pieces of money for pictures of the king by way of a present.

Plume. How? by way of a present! the son of a whore! I'll teach him to abuse honest fellows like you! scoundrel! rogue! villain!

[*Beats off the serjeant, and follows.*

Both. O brave noble captain! huzza. A brave captain, faith!

Cost. Now, Tummas, Carolus is Latin for a beating. This is the bravest captain I ever saw—Wounds! I've a month's mind to go with him.

Enter PLUME.

Plume. A dog, to abuse two such honest fellows as you——Look'e, gentlemen, I love a pretty fellow; I come among you as an officer to list soldiers, not as a kidnapper to steal slaves.

Cost. Mind that, Tummas.

Plume. I desire no man to go with me but as I went myself; I went a volunteer, as you or you may do, for a little time carried a musket, and now I command a company.

Tho. Mind that, Costar. A sweet gentleman!

Plume. 'Tis true, gentlemen, I might take an advantage of you; the king's money was in your pockets, my serjeant was ready to take his oath you were listed; but I scorn to do a base thing; you are both of you at your liberty.

Cost. Thank you, noble captain——I cod! I can't find in my heart to leave him, he talks so finely.

Tho. Ay, Costar, would he always hold in this mind.

Plume. Come, my lads, one thing more I'll tell you: you're both young tight fellows, and the army is the place to make you men for ever: every man has his lot, and you have yours: what think you of a purse of French gold out of a Monsieur's pocket, after you have dash'd out his brains with the but-end of your firelock? eh?

Cost. Waunds! I'll have it. Captain—give me a shilling; I'll follow you to the end of the world.

Tho. Nay, dear Costar! do'na be advis'd.

Plume. Here, my hero, here are two guineas for thee, as earnest of what I'll do farther for thee.

Tho. Do'na take it, do'na, dear Costar!

[*Cries, and pulls back his arm.*

Cost. I will—I will—Waunds! my mind gives me

that I shall be a captain myself——I take your money, Sir, and now I am a gentleman.

Plume. Give me thy hand, and now you and I will travel the world o'er, and command it wherever we tread—Bring your friend with you, if you can.

[*Aside.*

Cost. Well, Tummas, must we part?

Tho. No, Costar, I cannot leave thee—Come, captain, I'll e'en go along too; and if you have two honester simpler lads in your company than we two have been, I'll say no more.

Plume. Here, my lad. [*Gives him money.*] Now your name?

Tho. Tummas Appletree.

Plume. And yours?

Cost. Costar Pearmain.

Plume. Well said, Costar! Born where?

Tho. Both in Herefordshire.

Plume. Very well. Courage, my lads——Now we'll

[Sings.] *Over the hills, and far away.*
Courage, boys, it is one to ten
But we return all gentlemen;
While conq'ring colours we display,
Over the hills, and far away.

Kite, take care of 'em.

Enter KITE.

Kite. A'n't you a couple of pretty fellows, now?

Here you have complained to the captain, I am to be turn'd out, and one of you will be serjeant. Which of you is to have my halberd?

Both Rec. I.

Kite. So you shall—in your guts—March, you sons of whores! [*Beats 'em off.*

ACT III. SCENE I.

The Market-Place. Enter PLUME *and* WORTHY.

Worthy.

I CANNOT forbear admiring the equality of our two fortunes: we love two ladies, they meet us half way, and just as we were upon the point of leaping into their arms, fortune drops in their laps, pride possesses their hearts, "a maggot fills their heads," madness takes them by the tails; they snort, kick up their heels, and away they run.

Plume. And leave us here to mourn upon the shore—a couple of poor melancholy monsters—What shall we do?

Wor. I have a trick for mine; the letter, you know, and the fortune-teller.

Plume. And I have a trick for mine.

Wor. What is't.

Plume. I'll never think of her again.

Wor. No!

Plume. No; I think myself above administering to the pride of any woman, were she worth twelve thou-

sand a-year, and I ha'n't the vanity to believe I shall gain a lady worth twelve hundred. The generous, good-natur'd Sylvia in her smock I admire; but the haughty and scornful Sylvia with her fortune I despise—What! sneak out of town, and not so much as a word, a line, a compliment!—'Sdeath! how far off does she live? I'll go and break her windows.

Wor. Ha, ha, ha! ay, and the window-bars too to come at her. Come, come, friend, no more of your rough military airs.

Enter KITE.

Kite. Captain, captain! Sir, look yonder, she's a-coming this way. 'Tis the prettiest, cleanest, little tit!

Plume. Now, Worthy, to shew you how much I'm in love—here she comes. But Kite, what is that great country fellow with her?

Kite. I can't tell, Sir.

Enter ROSE, *followed by her Brother* BULLOCK, *with Chickens on her Arm, in a Basket.*

Rose. Buy chickens, young and tender chickens, young and tender chickens.

Plume. Here, you chickens.

Rose. Who calls?

Plume. Come, hither, pretty maid!

Rose. Will you please to buy, Sir?

Wor. Yes, child, we'll both buy.

Plume. Nay, Worthy, that's not fair; market for yourself—Come, child, I'll buy all you have.

Rose. Then all I have is at your service. [*Curtesies.*

Wor. Then must I shift for myself, I find. [*Exit.*

Plume. Let me see; young and tender you say.

[*Chucks her under the chin.*

Rose. As ever you tasted in your life, Sir.

Plume. Come, I must examine your basket to the bottom, my dear!

Rose. Nay, for that matter, put in your hand; feel, Sir; I warrant my ware is as good as any in the market.

Plume. And I'll buy it all, child, were it ten times more.

Rose. Sir, I can furnish you.

Plume. Come, then, we won't quarrel about the price; they're fine birds—Pray, what's your name, pretty creature!

Rose. Rose, Sir. My father is a farmer within three short miles o' the town: we keep this market; I sell chickens, eggs, and butter, and my brother Bullock there sells corn.

Bul. Come, sister, haste, we shall be late home.

[*Whistles about the stage.*

Plume. Kite! [*Tips him the wink, he returns it.*] Pretty Mrs. Rose—you have—let me see—how many?

Rose. A dozen, Sir, and they are richly worth a crown.

Bul. Come, Rouse; I sold fifty strake of barley

to-day in half this time; but you will higgle and higgle for a penny more than the commodity is worth.

Rose. What's that to you, oaf? I can make as much out of a groat as you can out of fourpence, I'm sure —The gentleman bids fair, and when I meet with a chapman I know how to make the best of him—And so, Sir, I say for a crown-piece the bargain's yours.

Plume. Here's a guinea, my dear!

Rose. I can't change your money, Sir.

Plume. Indeed, indeed, but you can—my lodging is hard by, chicken! and we'll make change there.

[*Goes off, she follows him.*

Kite. So, Sir, as I was telling you, I have seen one of these hussars eat up a ravelin for his breakfast, and afterwards pick his teeth with a palisado.

Bul. Ay, you soldiers see very strange things; but pray, Sir, what is a rabelin?

Kite. Why, 'tis like a modern mince'd pie, but the crust is confounded hard, and the plums are somewhat hard of digestion.

Bul. Then your palisado, pray what may he be? Come, Rouse, pray ha' done.

Kite. Your palisado is a pretty sort of bodkin, about the thickness of my leg.

Bul. That's a fib, I believe. [*Aside.*] Eh! where's Rouse? Rouse, Rouse! S'flesh! where's Rouse gone?

Kite. She's gone with the captain.

Bul. The captain! wauns! there's no pressing of women, sure.

Kite. But there is, sure.

Bul. If the captain shou'd press Rouse, I should be ruin'd——Which way went she? Oh! the devil take your rabelins and palisadoes! [*Exit.*

Kite. You shall be better acquainted with them, honest Bullock, or I shall miss of my aim.

Enter WORTHY.

Wor. Why thou art the most useful fellow in nature to your captain, admirable in your way I find.

Kite. Yes, Sir, I understand my business, I will say it.

Wor. How came you so qualify'd?

Kite. You must know, Sir, I was born a gipsy, and bred among that crew till I was ten years old; there I learn'd canting and lying: I was bought from my mother Cleopatra by a certain nobleman for three pistoles, "who liking my beauty made me his page;" there I learn'd impudence and pimping: I was turn'd off for wearing my lord's linen, and drinking my lady's ratafia, and turn'd bailiff's follower; there I learn'd bullying and swearing: I at last got into the army; and there I learn'd whoring and drinking—so that if your worship pleases to cast up the whole sum, *viz.* canting, lying, impudence, pimping, bullying, swearing, whoring, drinking, and a halberd, you will find the sum total amount to a Recruiting Serjeant.

Wor. And pray what induc'd you to turn soldier?

Kite. Hunger and ambition. The fears of starving and hopes of a truncheon led me along to a gentleman

with a fair tongue and fair periwig, who loaded me with promises; but 'gad it was the lightest load that ever I felt in my life——He promised to advance me, and indeed he did so—to a garret in the Savoy. I asked him why he put me in prison? he called me lying dog, and said I was in garrison; and indeed 'tis a garrison that may hold out till doomsday before I should desire to take it again. But here comes Justice Balance.

Enter BALANCE *and* BULLOCK.

Bal. Here you, serjeant, where's your captain? here's a poor foolish fellow comes clamouring to me with a complaint that your captain has press'd his sister. Do you know any thing of this matter, Worthy?

Wor. Ha, ha, ha! I know his sister is gone with Plume to his lodging to sell him some chickens.

Bal. Is that all? the fellow's a fool.

Bul. I know that, an't like your worship; but if your worship pleases to grant me a warrant to bring her before your worship for fear of the worst.

Bal. Thou'rt mad, fellow; thy sister's safe enough.

Kite. I hope so too. [*Aside.*

Wor. Hast thou no more sense, fellow, than to believe that the captain can list women?

Bul. I know not whether they list them, or what they do with them, but I'm sure they carry as many women as men with them out of the country.

Bal. But how came you not to go along with your sister?

Bul. Lord, Sir, I thought no more of her going than I do of the day I shall die: but this gentleman here, not suspecting any hurt neither, I believe—you thought no harm, friend, did you?

Kite. Lack-a-day, Sir, not I——only that I believe I shall marry her to-morrow.

Bal. I begin to smell powder. Well, friend, but what did that gentleman with you?

Bul. Why, Sir, he entertain'd me with a fine story of a great sea-fight between the Hungarians, I think it was, and the wild Irish.

Kite. And so, Sir, while we were in the heat of battle—the captain carry'd off the baggage.

Bal. Serjeant, go along with this fellow to your captain, give him my humble service, and desire him to discharge the wench though he has listed her.

Bul. Ay, and if she ben't free for that, he shall have another man in her place.

Kite. Come, honest friend, you shall go to my quarters instead of the captain's. [*Aside.*

[*Exeunt* Kite *and* Bullock.

Bal. We must get this mad captain his complement of men and send him packing, else he'll over-run the country.

Wor. You see, Sir, how little he values your daughter's disdain.

Bal. I like him the better: I was just such another fellow at his age: "I never set my heart upon any

" woman so much as to make myself uneasy at the " disappointment; but what was very surprising both " to myself and friends, I chang'd o' th' sudden from " the most fickle lover to the most constant husband " in the world."—But how goes your affair with Melinda?

Wor. Very slowly. " Cupid had formerly wings, " but I think in this age he goes upon crutches; or I " fancy, Venus had been dallying with her cripple " Vulcan when my amour commenc'd, which has " made it go on so lamely."—My mistress has got a captain too, but such a captain!—as I live, yonder he comes!

Bal. Who, that bluff fellow in the sash? I don't know him.

Wor. But I engage he knows you and every body at first sight; his impudence were a prodigy, were not his ignorance proportionable; he has the most universal acquaintance of any man living, for he won't be alone, and nobody will keep him company twice: then he's a Cæsar among the women, *veni, vidi, vici*, that's all. If he has but talk'd with the maid he swears he has lain with the mistress: but the most surprising part of his character is his memory, which is the most prodigious and the most trifling in the world.

Bal. " I have met with such men, and I take this " good-for-nothing memory to proceed from a cer- " tain contexture of the brain which is purely adapt- " ed to impertinencies, and there they lodge secure,

" the owner having no thoughts of his own to disturb " them. I have known a man as perfect as a chrono- " loger as to the day and year of most important tran- " sactions, but be altogether ignorant in the causes " or consequences of any one thing of moment:" I have known another acquire so much by travel as to tell you the names of most places in Europe, with their distances of miles, leagues, or hours, as punctually as a post-boy; but for any thing else as ignorant as the horse that carries the mail.

Wor. This is your man, Sir, add but the traveller's privilege of lying, and even that he abuses: this is the picture, behold the life.

Enter BRAZEN.

Braz. Mr. Worthy, I'm your servant, and so forth —Hark'e, my dear!

Wor. Whispering, Sir, before company is not manners, and when nobody's by 'tis foolish.

Braz. Company! *mort de ma vie!* I beg the gentleman's pardon—who is he?

Wor. Ask him.

Braz. So I will. My dear! I am your servant, and so forth—Your name, my dear!

Bal. Very laconick, Sir.

Braz. Laconick! a very good name, truly. I have known several of the Laconicks abroad. Poor Jack Laconick! he was killed at the battle of Landen. I remember that he had a blue ribband in his hat that

very day, and after he fell we found a piece of neat's tongue in his pocket.

Bal. Pray, Sir, did the French attack us or we them at Landen.

Braz. The French attack us! Oons, Sir, are you a Jacobite?

Bal. Why that question?

Braz. Because none but a Jacobite cou'd think that the French durst attack us—No, Sir, we attack'd them on the—I have reason to remember the time, for I had two-and-twenty horses kill'd under me that day.

Wor. Then, Sir, you must have rid mighty hard.

Bal. Or, perhaps, Sir, like my countrymen, you rid upon half-a-dozen horses at once.

Braz. What do ye mean, gentlemen? I tell you they were kill'd, all torn to pieces by cannon-shot, except six I stak'd to death upon the enemy's *chevaux de frise*.

Bal. Noble captain! may I crave your name?

Braz. Brazen, at your service.

Bal. Oh, Brazen! a very good name. I have known several of the Brazens abroad.

Wor. Do you know one Captain Plume, Sir?

Braz. Is he any thing related to Frank Plume in Northamptonshire?—Honest Frank! many, many a dry bottle have we crack'd hand to fist. You must have known his brother Charles that was concern'd in the India Company; he marry'd the daughter of Old Tonguepad, the Master in Chancery, a very pretty

woman, only she squinted a little; she died in child-bed of her first child, but the child surviv'd: 'twas a daughter, but whether it was call'd Margaret or Margery upon my soul I can't remember. [*Looking on his watch.*] But, gentlemen, I must meet a lady, a twenty thousand pounder, presently, upon the walk by the water—Worthy, your servant; Laconick, your's. [*Exit.*

Bal. If you can have so mean an opinion of Melinda as to be jealous of this fellow, I think she ought to give you cause to be so.

Wor. I don't think she encourages him so much for gaining herself a lover, as to set up a rival. Were there any credit to be given to his words, I should believe Melinda had made him this assignation. I must go see, Sir, you'll pardon me. [*Exit.*

Bal. Ay, ay, Sir, you're a man of business—But what have we got here?

Enter ROSE *singing.*

Rose. And I shall be a lady, a captain's lady, and ride single upon a white horse with a star, upon a velvet side-saddle; and I shall go to London and see the tombs, and the lions, and the king and queen. Sir, an please your worship, I have often seen your worship ride through our grounds a-hunting, begging your worship's pardon. Pray, what may this lace be worth a-yard? [*Shewing some lace.*

Bal. Right Mechlin, by this light! Where did you get this lace, child?

Rose. No matter for that, Sir; I came honestly by it.

Bal. I question it much. [*Aside.*

Rose. And see here, Sir, a fine Turkey-shell snuff-box, and fine mangere: see here. [*Takes snuff affectedly.*] The captain learnt me how to take it with an air.

Bal. Oh ho! the captain! now the murder's out. And so the captain taught you to take it with an air?

Rose. Yes, and give it with an air too. Will your worship please to taste my snuff?

[*Offers the box affectedly.*

Bal. You are a very apt scholar, pretty maid! And pray, what did you give the captain for these fine things?

Rose. He's to have my brother for a soldier, and two or three sweethearts I have in the country; they shall all go with the captain. Oh! he's the finest man, and the humblest withal. Would you believe it, Sir? he carried me up with him to his own chamber with as much fam-mam-mil-yararality as if I had been the best lady in the land.

Bal. Oh! he's a mighty familiar gentleman as can be.

Enter PLUME, *singing.*

Plume. *But it is not so*
With those that go
Thro' frost and snow——
Most apropos
My maid with the milking-pail. [*Takes hold of* Rose.

How, the justice! then I'm arraign'd, condemn'd, and executed.

Bal. Oh, my noble captain!

Rose. And my noble captain, too, Sir.

Plume. 'Sdeath! child, are you mad?—Mr. Balance, I am so full of business about my recruits that I ha'n't a moment's time to—I have just now three or four people to———

Bal. Nay, captain, I must speak to you——

Rose. And so must I too, captain.

Plume. Any other time, Sir—I cannot for my life, Sir——

Bal. Pray, Sir———

Plume. Twenty thousand things—I wou'd—but—now, Sir, pray—Ravil take me—I cannot—I must—

[*Breaks away.*

Bal. Nay, I'll follow you. [*Exit.*

Rose. And I too. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

The Walk by the Severn Side. Enter MELINDA *and her Maid* LUCY.

Mel. And pray was it a ring, or buckle, or pendents, or knots; or in what shape was the almighty gold transform'd that has brib'd you so much in his favour?

Lucy. Indeed, Madam, the last bribe I had from

the captain was only a small piece of Flanders' lace for a cap.

Mel. Ay, Flanders' lace is as constant a present from officers to their women, as something else is from their women to them. They every year bring over a cargo of lace to cheat the king of his duty and his subjects of their honesty.

Lucy. They only barter one sort of prohibited goods for another, Madam.

Mel. Has any of 'em been bartering with you, Mrs. Pert, that you talk so like a trader?

"*Lucy.* Madam, you talk as peevish to me as if it "were my fault! the crime is none of mine, tho' I "pretend to excuse it: though he should not see you "this week, can I help it? But as I was saying, Ma- "dam, his friend, captain Plume, has so taken him "up these two days.

"*Mel.* Psha! would his friend the captain were "ty'd upon his back; I warrant he's never been so- "ber since that confounded captain came to town. "The devil take all officers, I say; they do the na- "tion more harm by debauching us at home, than "they do good by defending us abroad. No sooner "a captain comes to town but all the young fellows "flock about him, and we can't keep a man to our- "selves."

Lucy. One would imagine, Madam, by your con- cern for Worthy's absence, that you should use him better when he's with you.

Mel. Who told you, pray, that I was concern'd for

his absence? I'm only vex'd that I have had nothing said to me these two days: as one may love the treason and hate the traitor. Oh! here comes another captain, and a rogue that has the confidence to make love to me; but indeed I don't wonder at that, when he has the assurance to fancy himself a fine gentleman.

Lucy. If he should speak o' th' assignation I should be ruin'd. [*Aside.*

Enter BRAZEN.

Braz. True to the touch, faith! [*Aside.*] Madam, I am your humble servant, and all that, Madam. A fine river this same Severn — Do you love fishing, Madam?

Mel. 'Tis a pretty melancholy amusement for lovers.

Braz. I'll go buy hooks and lines presently; for you must know, Madam, that I have serv'd in Flanders against the French, in Hungary against the Turks, and in Tangier against the Moors, and I was never so much in love before; and, split me, Madam, in all the campaigns I ever made I have not seen so fine a woman as your ladyship.

Mel. And from all the men I ever saw I never had so fine a compliment: but you soldiers are the best bred men, that we must allow.

Braz. Some of us, Madam; but there are brutes among us too, very sad brutes; for my own part, I have always had the good luck to prove agreeable. I

have had very considerable offers, Madam—I might have married a German princess worth fifty thousand crowns a-year, but her stove disgusted me. The daughter of a Turkish bashaw fell in love with me, too, when I was a prisoner among the Infidels; she offered to rob her father of his treasure, and make her escape with me; but I don't know how, my time was not come: hanging and marriage, you know, go by destiny: Fate has reserv'd me for a Shropshire lady worth twenty thousand pounds. Do you know any such person, Madam?

Mel. Extravagant coxcomb! [*Aside.*] To be sure, a great many ladies of that fortune would be proud of the name of Mrs. Brazen.

Braz. Nay, for that matter, Madam, there are women of very good quality of the name of Brazen.

Enter WORTHY.

Mel. Oh, are you there, gentleman!—Come, captain, we'll walk this way. Give me your hand.

Braz. My hand, heart's blood, and guts, are at your service. Mr. Worthy, your servant, my dear! [*Exit leading* Melinda.

Wor. Death and fire! this is not to be borne.

Enter PLUME.

Plume. No more it is, faith.

Wor. What?

Plume. The March beer at The Raven. I have been doubly serving the king, raising men and raising

the excise. Recruiting and elections are rare friends to the excise.

Wor. You a'n't drunk?

Plume. No, no, whimsical only; I could be mighty foolish, and fancy myself mighty witty. Reason still keeps its throne, but it nods a little, that's all.

Wor. Then you're just fit for a frolick.

Plume. As fit as close pinners for a punk in the pit.

Wor. There's your play, then; recover me that vessel from that Tangerine.

Plume. She's well rigg'd, but how is she mann'd?

Wor. By Captain Brazen, that I told you of today; she is call'd the Melinda, a first rate I can assure you; she sheer'd off with him just now on purpose to affront me; but according to your advice I would take no notice, because I would seem to be above a concern for her behaviour; but have a care of a quarrel.

Plume. No, no: I never quarrel with any thing in my cups but an oysterwench or a cookmaid, and if they ben't civil I knock 'em down. But heark'e, my friend, I'll make love, and I must make love—I tell you what, I'll make love like a platoon.

Wor. Platoon! how's that?

Plume. I'll kneel, stoop, and stand, faith: most ladies are gain'd by platooning.

Wor. Here they come; I must leave you. [*Exit.*

Plume. So! now must I look as sober and demure as a whore at a christening.

Enter BRAZEN *and* MELINDA.

Braz. Who's that, Madam?

Mel. A brother officer of your's, I suppose, Sir.

Braz. Ay—my dear! [*To* Plume.

Plume. My dear! [*Run and embrace.*

Braz. My dear boy! how is't? Your name, my dear! If I be not mistaken I have seen your face.

Plume. I never saw your's in my life, my dear—— but there's a face well known as the sun's, that shines on all, and is by all ador'd.

Braz. Have you any pretensions, Sir?

Plume. Pretensions!

Braz. That is, Sir, have you ever serv'd abroad?

Plume. I have serv'd at home, Sir, for ages serv'd this cruel fair, and that will serve the turn, Sir.

Mel. So, between the fool and the rake I shall bring a fine spot of work upon my hands! I see Worthy yonder; I could be content to be friends with him would he come this way.

Braz. Will you fight for the lady, Sir?

Plume. No, Sir, but I'll have her notwithstanding.

Thou peerless princess of Salopian plains,
Envy'd by nymphs, and worshipp'd by the swains—

Braz. Oons! Sir, not fight for her!

Plume. Prithee be quiet—I shall be out—

Behold, how humbly does the Severn glide
To greet thee, princess of the Severn side.

Braz. Don't mind him, Madam—if he were not so well dress'd I should take him for a poet; but I'll shew you the difference presently. Come, Madam, we'll place you between us, and now the longest sword carries her. [*Draws.*

Mel. [*Shrieking.*]

Enter WORTHY.

Oh, Mr. Worthy! save me from these madmen.

[*Exit with* Worthy.

Plume. Ha, ha, ha! why don't you follow, Sir, and fight the bold ravisher?

Braz. No, Sir, you are my man.

Plume. I don't like the wages; I won't be your man.

Braz. Then you're not worth my sword.

Plume. No! pray what did it cost?

Braz. It cost me twenty pistoles in France, and my enemies thousands of lives in Flanders.

Plume. Then they had a dear bargain.

Enter SYLVIA, *in Man's Apparel.*

Syl. Save ye, save ye! gentlemen.

Braz. My dear! I'm yours.

Plume. Do you know the gentleman?

Braz. No, but I will presently—Your name, my dear?

Syl. Wilful, Jack Wilful, at your service.

Braz. What, the Kentish Wilfuls, or those of Staffordshire?

Syl. Both, Sir, both; I'm related to all the Wilfuls in Europe, and I'm head of the family at present.

Plume. Do you live in this country, Sir?

Syl. Yes, Sir, I live where I stand; I have neither home, house, or habitation, beyond this spot of ground.

Braz. What are you, Sir?

Syl. A rake.

Plume. In the army, I presume.

Syl. No, but I intend to list immediately. Look'e, gentlemen, he that bids the fairest has me.

Braz. Sir, I'll prefer you; I'll make you a corporal this minute.

Plume. Corporal! I'll make you my companion; you shall eat with me.

Braz. You shall drink with me.

Plume. You shall lie with me, you young rogue. [*Kisses.*

Braz. You shall receive your pay, and do no duty.

Syl. Then you must make me a field-officer.

Plume. Pho, pho, pho! I'll do more than all this, I'll make you a corporal, and give you a brevet for serjeant.

Braz. Can you read and write, Sir?

Syl. Yes.

Braz. Then your business is done—I'll make you chaplain to the regiment.

Syl. Your promises are so equal that I'm at a loss to choose. There is one Plume that I hear much

commended in town; pray, which of you is Captain Plume.

Plume. I am Captain Plume.

Braz. No, no, I am Captain Plume.

Syl. Heyday?

Plume. Captain Plume! I'm your servant, my dear!

Braz. Captain Brazen! I'm yours—The fellow dares not fight. [*Aside.*

Enter KITE.

Kite. Sir, if you please——[*Goes to whisper* Plume.

Plume. No, no, there's your captain. Captain Plume, your serjeant has got so drunk he mistakes me for you.

Braz. He's an incorrigible sot. Here, my Hector of Holborn, here's forty shillings for you.

Plume. I forbid the bans. Look'e, friend, you shall list with Captain Brazen.

Syl. I will see Captain Brazen hang'd first; I will list with Captain Plume: I am a free-born Englishman, and will be a slave my own way. Look'e, Sir, will you stand by me? [*To* Brazen.

Braz. I warrant you, my lad.

Syl. Then I will tell you, Captain Brazen, [*To* Plume.] that you are an ignorant, pretending, impudent coxcomb.

Braz. Ay, ay, a sad dog.

Syl. A very sad dog. Give me the money, noble Captain Plume.

Plume. Then you won't list with Captain Brazen?

Syl. I won't.

Braz. Never mind him, child; I'll end the dispute presently. Hark'e, my dear!

[*Takes* Plume *to one Side of the Stage, and entertains him in dumb Show.*

Kite. Sir, he in the plain coat is Captain Plume; I am his serjeant, and will take my oath on't.

Syl. What! you are Serjeant Kite?

Kite. At your service.

Syl. Then I would not take your oath for a farthing.

Kite. A very understanding youth of his age! Pray, Sir, let me look you full in the face.

Syl. Well, Sir, what have you to say to my face?

Kite. The very image of my brother; two bullets of the same caliber were never so like: it must be Charles; Charles———

Syl. What do you mean by Charles?

Kite. The voice too, only a little variation in *F fant* flat. My dear brother! for I must call you so, if you should have the fortune to enter into the most noble society of the sword I bespeak you for a comrade.

Syl. No, Sir, I'll be the captain's comrade if anybody's.

Kite. Ambition there again! 'tis a noble passion for a soldier; by that I gain'd this glorious halberd. Ambition! I see a commission in his face already. Pray, noble captain, give me leave to salute you.

[*Offers to kiss her.*

Syl. What! men kiss one another.

Kite. We officers do, 'tis our way; we live together like man and wife, always either kissing or fighting: but I see a storm coming.

Syl. Now, serjeant, I shall see who is your captain by your knocking down the other.

Kite. My captain scorns assistance, Sir.

Braz. How dare you contend for any thing, and not dare to draw your sword? But you are a young fellow, and have not been much abroad; I excuse that; but prithee resign the man, prithee do: you are a very honest fellow.

Plume. You lie; and you are a son of a whore.

[*Draws, and makes up to* Brazen.

Braz. Hold, hold; did not you refuse to fight for the lady? [*Retiring.*

Plume. I always do, but for a man I'll fight knee-deep; so you lie again.

[Plume *and* Brazen *fight a traverse or two about the Stage,* Sylvia *draws, and is held by* Kite, *who sounds to Arms with his Mouth, takes* Sylvia *in his Arms, and carries her off the Stage.*

Braz. Hold! where's the man?

Plume. Gone.

Braz. Then what do we fight for? [*Puts up.*] Now let's embrace, my dear!

Plume. With all my heart, my dear! [*Putting up.*] I suppose Kite has listed him by this time. [*Embraces.*

Braz. You are a brave fellow: I always fight with a man before I make him my friend; and if once I

find he will fight I never quarrel with him afterwards. And now I'll tell you a secret, my dear friend! that lady we frighten'd out of the walk just now I found in bed this morning, so beautiful, so inviting; I presently lock'd the door—but I'm a man of honour—but I believe I shall marry her nevertheless—her twenty thousand pounds, you know, will be a pretty conveniency. I had an assignation with her here, but your coming spoil'd my sport. Curse you, my dear! but don't do so again——

Plume. No, no, my dear! men are my business at present. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV. SCENE I.

The Walk continues. Enter ROSE *and* BULLOCK *meeting.*

Rose.

WHERE have you been, you great booby? you are always out of the way in the time of preferment.

Bul. Preferment! who should prefer me?

Rose. I would prefer you! who should prefer a man but a woman? Come, throw away that great club, hold up your head, cock your hat, and look big.

Bul. Ah, Rouse, Rouse! I fear somebody will look big sooner than folk think of. Here has been

Cartwheel your sweetheart; what will become of him?

Rose. Look'e, I'm a great woman, and will provide for my relations: I told the captain how finely he play'd upon the tabor and pipe, so he sat him down for drum-major.

Bul. Nay, sister, why did not you keep that place for me? you know I have always lov'd to be a drumming, if it were but on a table or on a quart pot.

Enter SYLVIA.

Syl. Had I but a commission in my pocket I fancy my breeches would become me as well as any ranting fellow of 'em all; for I take a bold step, a rakish toss, a smart cock, and an impudent air, to be the principal ingredients in the composition of a captain. What's here? Rose, my nurse's daughter! I'll go and practise. Come, child, kiss me at once. [*Kisses* Rose.] And her brother too! Well, honest Dungfork, do you know the difference between a horse and a cart and a cart-horse, eh?

Bul. I presume that your worship is a captain by your clothes and your courage.

Syl. Suppose I were, would you be contented to list, friend?

Rose. No, no; though your worship be a handsome man, there be others as fine as you. My brother is engag'd to Captain Plume.

Syl. Plume! do you know Captain Plume?

Rose. Yes, I do, and he knows me. He took the

ribands out of his shirt sleeves and put them into my shoes: see there—I can assure you that I can do any thing with the captain.

Bul. That is, in a modest way, Sir. Have a care what you say, Rouse; don't shame your parentage.

Rose. Nay, for that matter, I am not so simple as to say that I can do any thing with the captain but what I may do with any body else.

Syl. So!——And pray what do you expect from this captain, child?

Rose. I expect, Sir!—I expect—but he ordered me to tell nobody—but suppose he should propose to marry me?

Syl. You should have a care, my dear! men will promise any thing beforehand.

Rose. I know that; but he promised to marry me afterwards.

Bul. Wauns! Rouse, what have you said?

Syl. Afterwards! After what?

Rose. After I had sold my chickens—I hope there's no harm in that.

Enter PLUME.

Plume. What, Mr. Wilful so close with my market woman.

Syl. I'll try if he loves her. [*Aside.*] Close, Sir, ay, and closer yet, Sir. Come, my pretty maid! you and I will withdraw a little.

Plume. No, no, friend, I ha'n't done with her yet.

Syl. Nor have I begun with her; so I have as good a right as you have.

Plume. Thou'rt a bloody impudent fellow!

Syl. Sir, I would qualify myself for the service.

Plume. Hast thou really a mind to the service?

Syl. Yes, Sir; so let her go.

Rose. Pray, gentlemen, don't be so violent.

Plume. Come, leave it to the girl's own choice. Will you belong to me or to that gentleman?

Rose. Let me consider; you're both very handsome.

Plume. Now the natural inconstancy of her sex begins to work.

Rose. Pray, Sir, what will you give me?

Bul. Dunna be angry, Sir, that my sister should be mercenary, for she's but young.

Syl. Give thee, child! I'll set thee above scandal; you shall have a coach with six before and six behind; an equipage to make vice fashionable, and put virtue out of countenance.

Plume. Pho! that's easily done: I'll do more for thee, child, I'll buy you a furbelow-scarf, and give you a ticket to see a play.

Bul. A play! wauns! Rouse, take the ticket, and let's see the show.

Syl. Look'e, captain, if you won't resign I'll go list with Captain Brazen this minute.

Plume. Will you list with me if I give up my title?

Syl. I will.

Plume. Take her; I'll change a woman for a man at any time.

Rose. I have heard before, indeed, that you captains us'd to sell your men.

Bul. Pray, captain, do not send Rouse to the Western Indies.

Plume. Ha, ha, ha! West Indies! No, no, my honest lad, give me thy hand; nor you nor she shall move a step farther than I do. This gentleman is one of us, and will be kind to you, Mrs. Rose.

Rose. But will you be so kind to me, Sir, as the captain would?

Syl. I can't be altogether so kind to you; my circumstances are not so good as the captain's; but I'll take care of you, upon my word.

Plume. Ay, ay, we'll all take care of her; she shall live like a princess, and her brother here shall be—What would you be?

Bul. Oh, Sir, if you had not promis'd the place of drum-major.

Plume. Ay, that is promis'd; but what think you of barrack-master? you are a person of understanding, and barrack-master you shall be—But what's become of this same Cartwheel you told me of, my dear?

Rose. We'll go fetch him—Come, brother barrack-master—We shall find you at home, noble captain?

[*Exeunt* Rose *and* Bullock.

Plume. Yes, yes; and now, Sir, here are your forty shillings.

Syl. Captain Plume, I despise your listing money; if I do serve 'tis purely for love—of that wench, I mean—for you must know that among my other sallies I've spent the best part of my fortune in search of a maid, and could never find one hitherto; so you may be assured I'd not sell my freedom under a less purchase than I did my estate—so before I list I must be certify'd that this girl is a virgin.

Plume. Mr. Wilful, I can't tell you how you can be certify'd in that point till you try; but upon my honour she may be a Vestal for aught that I know to the contrary. I gain'd her heart indeed by some trifling presents and promises, and knowing that the best security for a woman's heart is her person, I would have made myself master of that too, had not the jealousy of my impertinent landlady interposed.

Syl. So you only want an opportunity for accomplishing your designs upon her.

Plume. Not at all; I have already gain'd my ends, which were only the drawing in one or two of her followers. "The women you know are the load-"stones every where; gain the wives and you are "caress'd by the husbands; please the mistress and "you are valu'd by the gallants; secure an interest "with the finest women at court and you procure "the favour of the greatest men;" kiss the prettiest country wenches and you are sure of listing the lustiest fellows. "Some people call this artifice, but I "term it stratagem, since it is so main a part of the "service: besides, the fatigue of recruiting is so

" intolerable, that unless we could make ourselves " some pleasure amidst the pain, no mortal man " would be able to bear it."

Syl. Well, Sir, I am satisfied as to the point in debate; but now let me beg you to lay aside your recruiting airs, put on the man of honour, and tell me plainly what usage I must expect when I am under your command?

Plume. " You must know, in the first place then, " I hate to have gentlemen in my company, they are " always troublesome and expensive, sometimes dan- " gerous: and, 'tis a constant maxim amongst us, " that those who know the least obey the best. Not- " withstanding all this, I find something so agreeably " about you that engages me to court your company; " and I can't tell how it is, but I should be uneasy " to see you under the command of any body else."—Your usage will chiefly depend upon your behaviour; only this you must expect, that if you commit a small fault I will excuse it, if a great one I'll discharge you; for something tells me I shall not be able to punish you.

Syl. And something tells me that if you do discharge me 'twill be the greatest punishment you can inflict; for were we this moment to go upon the greatest dangers in your profession they would be less terrible to me than to stay behind you—And now, your hand, this lists me—and now you are my captain.

Plume. Your friend. [*Kisses her.*] 'Sdeath! there's something in this fellow that charms me.

Syl. One favour I must beg—this affair will make some noise, and I have some friends that would censure my conduct if I threw myself into the circumstance of a private centinel of my own head—I must therefore take care to be impress by the act of parliament; you shall leave that to me.

Plume. What you please as to that—Will you lodge at my quarters in the mean time? you shall have part of my bed.

Syl. Oh fy! lie with a common soldier! would not you rather lie with a common woman?

Plume. No, faith, I'm not that rake that the world imagines. I've got an air of freedom which people mistake for lewdness in me, as they mistake formality in others for religion.—The world is all a cheat, only I take mine, which is undesign'd, to be more excusable than theirs, which is hypocritical. I hurt nobody but myself; they abuse all mankind—Will you lie with me?

Syl. No, no, captain; you forget Rose; she's to be my bedfellow, you know.

Plume. I had forgot: pray be kind to her.

[*Exeunt severally.*

Enter MELINDA *and* LUCY.

Mel. 'Tis the greatest misfortune in nature for a woman to want a confidant: we are so weak that we can do nothing without assistance, and then a secret

racks us worse than the cholick—I am at this minute so sick of a secret, that I'm ready to faint away—— Help me, Lucy!

Lucy. Bless me! Madam, what's the matter?

Mel. Vapours only; I begin to recover.—If Sylvia were in town I could heartily forgive her faults for the ease of discovering my own.

Lucy. You are thoughtful, Madam, am not I worthy to know the cause?

" *Mel.* You are a servant, and a secret may make " you saucy.

" *Lucy.* Not unless you should find fault without a " cause.

" *Mel.* Cause or not cause, I must not lose the " pleasure of chiding when I please. Women must " discharge their vapours somewhere; and before " we get husbands our servants must expect to bear " with 'em.

" *Lucy.* Then, Madam, you had better raise me " to a degree above a servant; you know my family, " and that five hundred pounds would set me upon " the foot of a gentlewoman, and make me worthy " the confidence of any lady in the land; besides, " Madam, 'twill extremely encourage me in the great " design I now have in hand.

" *Mel.* I don't find that your design can be of any " great advantage to you; 'twill please me indeed in " the humour I have of being reveng'd on the fool " for his vanity of making love to me, so I don't

" much care if I do promise you five hundred pounds
" upon my day of marriage.

" *Lucy.* That is the way, Madam, to make me di-
" ligent in the vocation of a confidant, which I think
" is generally to bring people together."

Mel. Oh, Lucy! I can hold my secret no longer. You must know, that hearing of a famous fortune-teller in town I went disguis'd to satisfy a curiosity which has cost me dear. The fellow is certainly the devil, or one of his bosom-favourites: he has told me the most surprising things of my past life.

Lucy. Things past, Madam, can hardly be reckon'd surprising, because we know them already. Did he tell you any thing surprising that was to come.

Mel. One thing very surprising; he said I should die a maid!

Lucy. Die a maid! come into the world for nothing! —Dear Madam! if you should believe him, it might come to pass; for the bare thought on't might kill one in four-and-twenty hours—And did you ask him any questions about me?

Mel. You!—why I pass'd for you.

Lucy. So 'tis I that am to die a maid—But the devil was a liar from the beginning; he cann't make me die a maid—I've put it out of his power already.

[*Aside.*

Mel. I do but jest. I would have pass'd for you, and call'd myself Lucy; but he presently told me my name, my quality, my fortune, and gave me the whole

history of my life. He told me of a lover I had in this country, and described Worthy exactly, but in nothing so well as in his present indifference—I fled to him for refuge here to-day; he never so much as encouraged me in my fright, but coldly told me that he was sorry for the accident, because it might give the town cause to censure my conduct, excus'd his not waiting on me home, made me a careless bow, and walk'd off—'Sdeath! I could have stabb'd him or myself, 'twas the same thing—Yonder he comes—I will so use him!

Lucy. Don't exasperate him; consider what the fortune-teller told you. Men are scarce, and as times go it is not impossible for a woman to die a maid.

Enter WORTHY.

Mel. No matter.

Wor. I find she's warm'd; I must strike while the iron is hot—You 'ave a great deal of courage, Madam, to venture into the walks where you were so lately frightened.

Mel. And you have a quantity of impudence to appear before me that you so lately have affronted.

Wor. I had no design to affront you, nor appear before you either, Madam; I left you here because I had business in another place, and came hither thinking to meet another person.

Mel. Since you find yourself disappointed, I hope you'll withdraw to another part of the walk.

Wor. The walk is broad enough for us both. [*They walk by one another, he with his hat cock'd, she fretting and tearing her fan.*] Will you please to take snuff, Madam? [*He offers her his Box, she strikes it out of his Hand; while he is gathering it up,* Brazen *enters, and takes her round the Waist; she cuffs him.*

Braz. What, here before me, my dear!

Mel. What means this insolence?

Lucy. Are you mad? don't you see Mr. Worthy?

[*To* Brazen.

Braz. No, no; I'm struck blind—Worthy! odso! well turn'd—My mistress has wit at her fingers' ends—Madam, I ask your pardon; 'tis our way abroad—Mr. Worthy, you're the happy man.

Wor. I don't envy your happiness very much, if the lady can afford no other sort of favours but what she has bestowed upon you.

Mel. I'm sorry the favour miscarry'd, for it was design'd for you, Mr. Worthy; and be assur'd 'tis the last and only favour you must expect at my hands——captain, I ask your pardon. [*Exit with* Lucy.

Braz. I grant it——You see, Mr. Worthy, 'twas only a random-shot; it might have taken off your head as well as mine. Courage, my dear! 'tis the fortune of war; but the enemy has thought fit to withdraw, I think.

Wor. Withdraw! Oons! Sir, what d'ye mean by withdraw?

Braz. I'll shew you. [*Exit.*

Wor. She's lost, irrecoverably lost, and Plume's

advice has ruin'd me. 'Sdeath! why should I, that knew her haughty spirit, be rul'd by a man that's a stranger to her pride?

Enter PLUME.

Plume. Ha, ha, ha! a battle royal! Don't frown so, man; she's your own, I'll tell you: I saw the fury of her love in the extremity of her passion. The wildness of her anger is a certain sign that she loves you to madness. That rogue, Kite, began the battle with abundance of conduct, and will bring you off victorious, my life on't: he plays his part admirably: she's to be with him again presently.

Wor. But what could be the meaning of Brazen's familiarity with her?

Plume. You are no logician, if you pretend to draw consequences from the actions of fools—"There's "no arguing by the rule of reason upon a science "without principles; and such is their conduct"—Whim, unaccountable whim, hurries 'em on, like a man drunk with brandy before ten o'clock in the morning——But we lose our sport; Kite has open'd above an hour ago: let's away. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A Chamber, a Table with Books and Globes. KITE *disguised in a strange Habit, sitting at a Table.*

Kite. [*Rising.*] By the position of the heavens, gain'd from my observation upon these celestial

globes, I find that Luna was a tide-waiter, Sol a surveyor, Mercury a thief, Venus a whore, Saturn an alderman, Jupiter a rake, and Mars a serjeant of grenadiers—and this is the system of Kite the conjurer.

Enter PLUME *and* WORTHY.

Plume. Well, what success?

Kite. I have sent away a shoemaker and a tailor already; one's to be a captain of marines, and the other a major of dragoons—I am to manage them at night——Have you seen the lady, Mr. Worthy?

Wor. Ay, but it won't do—Have you shew'd her her name that I tore off from the bottom of the letter?

Kite. No, Sir, I reserve that for the last stroke.

Plume. What letter?

Wor. One that I would not let you see, for fear that you should break windows in good earnest. Here captain, put it into your pocket-book, and have it ready upon occasion. [*Knocking at the Door.*

Kite. Officers, to your posts. Tycho, mind the door.

[*Exeunt* Plume *and* Worthy. *Servant opens the door.*

" *Enter a Smith.*

" *Smith.* Well, Master, are you the cunning man?

" *Kite.* I am the learned Copernicus.

" *Smith.* Well, Master, I'm but a poor man, and " I can't afford above a shilling for my fortune.

" *Kite.* Perhaps that is more than 'tis worth.

" *Smith.* Look ye, doctor, let me have something " that's good for my shilling, or I'll have my money " again.

" *Kite.* If there be faith in the stars you shall have " your shilling forty-fold——Your hand, country- " man—You're by trade a smith.

" *Smith.* How the devil should you know that?

" *Kite.* Because the devil and you are brother " tradesmen——You were born under Forceps.

" *Smith.* Forceps, what's that?

" *Kite.* One of the signs: there's Leo, Sagittarius, " Forceps, Furns, Dixmude, Namur, Brussels, " Charleroy, and so forth—twelve of 'em—Let me " see—did you ever make any bombs or cannon- " bullets?

" *Smith.* Not I.

" *Kite.* You either have or will——The stars have " decreed that you shall be——I must have more mo- " ney, Sir——your fortune's great.

" *Smith.* Faith, doctor, I have no more.

" *Kite.* Oh, Sir, I'll trust you, and take it out of " your arrears.

" *Smith.* Arrears! what arrears?

" *Kite.* The five hundred pound that is owing to " you from the government.

" *Smith.* Owing me!

" *Kite.* Owing you, Sir——Let me see your t'other " hand—I beg your pardon, it will be owing to you,

" and the rogue of an agent will demand fifty per
" cent. for a fortnight's advance.

" *Smith.* I'm in the clouds, doctor, all this while.

" *Kite.* Sir, I am above 'em, among the stars—In
" two years three months and two hours you will be
" made captain of the forges to the grand train of
" artillery, and will have ten shillings a-day and two
" servants——'Tis the decree of the stars, and of the
" fix'd stars, that are as immoveable as your anvil
" ——Strike, Sir, while the iron is hot——Fly, Sir,
" begone.

" *Smith.* What would you have me do, doctor?
" I wish the stars would put me in a way for this fine
" place.

" *Kite.* The stars do—let me see—ay, about an
" hour hence walk carelessly into the market-place,
" and you will see a tall slender gentleman cheap'ning
" a pennyworth of apples, with a cane hanging upon
" his button: this gentleman will ask you what's
" o'clock—he's your man, and the maker of your
" fortune; follow him, follow him——And now go
" home, and take leave of your wife and children—
" An hour hence exactly is your time.

" *Smith.* A tall slender gentleman, you say, with
" a cane: pray, what sort of a head has the cane?

" *Kite.* An amber head, with a black riband.

" *Smith.* And pray, of what employment is the
" gentleman?

" *Kite.* Let me see; he's either a collector of the
" excise, or a plenipotentiary, or a captain of gre-

" nadiers——I can't tell exactly which——but he'll
" call you honest——Your name is——
" *Smith.* Thomas.
" *Kite.* He'll call you honest Tom.
" *Smith.* But how the devil should he know my
" name?
" *Kite.* Oh, there are several sorts of Toms——
" Tom o'Lincoln, Tom Tit, Tom Telltruth, Tom
" a'Beldam, and Tom Fool——Begone——An hour
" hence precisely. [*Knocking at the door.*
" *Smith.* You say he'll ask me what's o'clock?
" *Kite.* Most certainly——and you'll answer you
" don't know——And be sure you look at St. Mary's
" dial, for the sun won't shine, and if it should you
" won't be able to tell the figures.
" *Smith.* I will, I will. [*Exit.*
" *Plume.* Well done, conjurer! go on and pros-
" per. [*Behind.*
" *Kite.* As you were.

" *Enter a Butcher.*

" What, my old friend Pluck the butcher!——I of-
" fered the surly bull-dog five guineas this morning,
" and he refus'd it. [*Aside.*
" *But.* So, Mr. Conjurer, here's half-a-crown—
" And now you must understand——
" *Kite.* Hold, friend, I know your business before-
" hand——
" *But* You're devilish cunning then, for I don't
" well know it myself.

" *Kite.* I know more than you, friend—You have " a foolish saying, that such a one knows no more " than the man in the moon: I tell you the man in " the moon knows more than all the men under the " sun. Don't the moon see all the world?

" *But.* All the world see the moon I must confess.

" *Kite.* Then she must see all the world, that's " certain——Give me your hand——You're by trade " either a butcher or a surgeon.

" *But.* True, I am a butcher.

" *Kite.* And a surgeon you will be; the employ- " ments differ only in the name—He that can cut up " an ox may dissect a man; and the same dexterity " that cracks a marrow-bone will cut off a leg or an " arm.

" *But.* What d'ye mean, doctor? what d'ye mean?

" *Kite.* Patience, patience, Mr. Surgeon General; " the stars are great bodies, and move slowly.

" *But.* But what d'ye mean by surgeon general, " doctor?

" *Kite.* Nay, Sir, if your worship won't have pa- " tience I must beg the favour of your worship's ab- " sence.

" *But.* My worship! my worship! but why my " worship?

" *Kite.* Nay, then I have done. [*Sits.*

" *But.* Pray, doctor—

" *Kite.* Fire and fury, Sir! [*Rises in a passion.*] Do " you think the stars will be hurried? Do the stars " owe you any money, Sir, that you dare to dun their

" lordships at this rate?—Sir, I am porter to the stars,
" and I am ordered to let no dun come near their
" doors.

" *But.* Dear doctor! I never had any dealing with
" the stars; they don't owe me a penny—but since
" you are their porter, please to accept of this half-
" crown to drink their healths, and don't be angry—

" *Kite.* Let me see your hand, then once more—
" Here has been gold—five guineas, my friend, in
" this very hand this morning.

" *But.* Nay, then he is the devil—Pray, doctor,
" were you born of a woman, or did you come into
" the world of your own head?

" *Kite.* That's a secret—This gold was offered you
" by a proper handsome man call'd Hawk, or Buz-
" zard, or———

" *But.* Kite, you mean.

" *Kite.* Ay, ay, Kite.

" *But.* As errant a rogue as ever carried a halberd:
" the impudent rascal would have decoyed me for a
" soldier.

" *Kite.* A soldier! a man of your substance for a
" soldier! your mother has an hundred pound in hard
" money lying at this minute in the hands of a mer-
" cer not forty yards from this place.

" *But.* Oons! and so she has, but very few know
" so much.

" *Kite.* I know it, and that rogue, what's his name?
" Kite, knew it, and offered you five guineas to list,

" because he knew your poor mother would give the
" hundred for your discharge.

" *But.* There's a dog, now—'sflesh! doctor, I'll
" give you t'other half-crown and tell me that this
" same Kite will be hang'd.

Kite. He's in as much danger as any man in the
" county of Salop.

" *But.* There's your fee——but you have forgot
" the surgeon general all this while.

" *Kite.* You put the stars in a passion; [*Looks on his books.*] but now they are pacified again—Let me
" see, did you never cut off a man's leg?

" *But.* No.

" *Kite.* Recollect, pray.

" *But.* I say, no.

" *Kite.* That's strange, wonderful strange! but
" nothing is strange to me; such wonderful changes
" have I seen—The second or third, ay, the third
" campaign that you make in Flanders, the leg of a
" great officer will be shattered by a great shot, you
" will be there accidentally, and with your cleaver
" chop off the limb at a blow. In short, the opera-
" tion will be performed with so much dexterity, that
" with general applause you will be made surgeon
" general of the whole army.

" *But.* Nay, for the matter of cutting off a limb,
" I'll do't with any surgeon in Europe; but I have
" no thoughts of making a campaign.

Kite. You have no thoughts! what's matter for

" your thoughts? the stars have decreed it, and you " must go.

" *But.* The stars decree it! Oons! Sir, the justices " can't press me.

" *Kite.* Nay, friend, 'tis none of my business; I " have done; only mind this, you'll know more an " hour and half hence; that's all. Farewell.

" *But.* Hold, hold, doctor—Surgeon General! " what is the place worth, pray?

" *Kite.* Five hundred pounds a-year, besides gui- " neas for claps.

" *But.* Five hundred pounds a-year!—An hour " and a half hence, you say.

" *Kite.* Prithee, friend, be quiet, don't be trouble- " some; here's such a work to make a booby butcher " accept of five hundred pounds a-year—But if you " must hear it—I'll tell you in short, you'll be stand- " ing in your stall an hour and half hence, and a " gentleman will come by with a snuff box in his hand " and the tip of his handkerchief hanging out of his " right pocket; he'll ask you the price of a loin of " veal, and at the same time stroke your great dog " upon the head, and call him Chopper.

" *But.* Mercy on us! Chopper is the dog's name.

" *Kite.* Look'e there—what I say is true—things " that are to come must come to pass—Get you " home, sell off your stock, don't mind the whining " and the snivelling of your mother and your sister; " women always hinder preferment—make what mo- " ney you can, and follow that gentleman; his name

" begins with a P.—mind that—there will be the " barber's daughter too that you promised marriage " to—she will be pulling and hauling you to pieces.

" *But.* What, know Sally too! he's the devil, and " he needs must go that the devil drives. [*Going.*]

" ——The tip of his handkerchief out of his left " pocket.

" *Kite.* No, no, his right pocket; if it be the left " 'tis none of the man.

" *But.* Well, well, I'll mind him. [*Exit.*

" *Plume.* The right pocket you say.

[*Behind with his Pocket-Book.*

" *Kite.* I hear the rustling of silks. [*Knocking.*] Fly, " Sir, 'tis Madam Melinda."

Enter MELINDA *and* LUCY.

Kite. Tycho, chairs for the ladies.

Mel. Don't trouble yourself; we sha'n't stay, doctor.

Kite. Your ladyship is to stay much longer than you imagine.

Mel. For what?

Kite. For a husband—For your part, Madam, you won't stay for a husband. [*To* Lucy.

Lucy. Pray, doctor, do you converse with the stars or the devil?

Kite. With both; when I have the destinies of men in search, I consult the stars, when the affairs of women come under my hands, I advise with my t'other friend.

Mel. And have you raised the devil upon my account?

Kite. Yes, Madam, and he's now under the table.

Lucy. Oh, Heavens protect us! Dear Madam! let's be gone.

Kite. If you be afraid of him, why do ye come to consult him?

Mel. Don't fear, fool: do you think, Sir, that because I'm a woman I'm to be fool'd out of my reason or frighted out of my senses? Come, shew me this devil.

Kite. He's a little busy at present, but when he has done he shall wait on you.

Mel. What is he doing?

Kite. Writing your name in his pocket-book.

Mel. Ha, ha! my name! pray what have you or he to do with my name?

Kite. Look'e, fair lady! the devil is a very modest person, he seeks nobody unless they seek him first; he's chain'd up like a mastiff, and can't stir unless he be let loose—You come to me to have your fortune told—do you think, Madam, that I can answer you of my own head? No, Madam; the affairs of women are so irregular that nothing less than the devil can give any account of them. Now to convince you of your incredulity I'll shew you a trial of my skill. Here, you Cacodemo del Plumo, exert your power, draw me this lady's name, the word *Melinda*, in proper letters and characters of her own hand-writing—do it at three motions—one—two—three—'tis done—

Now, Madam, will you please to send your maid to fetch it?

Lucy. I fetch it! the devil fetch me if I do.

Mel. My name in my own hand-writing! that would be convincing indeed.

Kite. Seeing is believing. [*Goes to the Table, and lifts up the Carpet.*] Here Tre, Tre, poor Tre, give me the bone, sirrah. There's your name upon that square piece of paper. Behold——

Mel. 'Tis wonderful! my very letters to a tittle!

Lucy. 'Tis like your hand, Madam, but not so like your hand, neither; and now I look nearer 'tis not like your hand at all.

Kite. Here's a chambermaid now will outlie the devil!

Lucy. Look'e, Madam, they sha'n't impose upon us; people can't remember their hands no more than they can their faces—Come, Madam, let us be certain; write your name upon this paper, then we'll compare the two hands.

[*Takes out a Paper, and folds it.*

Kite. Any thing for your satisfaction, Madam—Here's pen and ink.

[Melinda *writes*, Lucy *holds the Paper.*

Lucy. Let me see it, Madam; 'tis the same——the very same—But I'll secure one copy for my own affairs. [*Aside.*

Mel. This is demonstration.

Kite. 'Tis so, Madam—the word Demonstration comes from Dæmon, the father of lies.

Mel. Well, doctor, I'm convinc'd: and now, pray, what account can you give of my future fortune?

Kite. Before the sun has made one course round this earthly globe, your fortune will be fix'd for happiness or misery.

Mel. What! so near the crisis of my fate?

Kite. Let me see—About the hour of ten to-morrow morning you will be saluted by a gentleman who will come to take his leave of you, being designed for travel; his intention of going abroad is sudden, and the occasion a woman. Your fortune and his are like the bullet and the barrel, one runs plump into the other—In short, if the gentleman travels he will die abroad, and if he does you will die before he comes home.

Mel. What sort of a man is he?

Kite. Madam, he's a fine gentleman, and a lover; that is, a man of very good sense, and a very great fool.

Mel. How is that possible, doctor?

Kite. Because, Madam—because it is so—A woman's reason is the best for a man's being a fool.

Mel. Ten o'clock you say?

Kite. Ten—about the hour of tea-drinking throughout the kingdom.

Mel. Here, doctor. [*Gives money.*] Lucy, have you any questions to ask?

Lucy. Oh, Madam! a thousand.

Kite. I must beg your patience till another time, for

I expect more company this minute; besides, I must discharge the gentleman under the table.

Lucy. O pray, Sir, discharge us first!

Kite. Tycho, wait on the ladies down stairs.

[*Exeunt* Melinda *and* Lucy.

Enter WORTHY *and* PLUME.

Kite. Mr. Worthy, you were pleas'd to wish me joy to-day; I hope to be able to return the compliment to-morrow.

Wor. I'll make it the best compliment to you that ever I made in my life, if you do; but I must be a traveller you say?

Kite. No farther than the chops of the channel I presume, Sir.

Plume. That we have converted already. [*Knocking hard.*] Heyday! you don't profess midwifery, doctor?

Kite. Away to your ambuscade.

[*Exeunt* Worthy *and* Plume.

Enter BRAZEN.

Braz. Your servant, my dear?

Kite. Stand off, I have my familiar already.

Braz. Are you bewitch'd, my dear?

Kite. Yes, my dear! but mine is a peaceable spirit, and hates gunpowder. Thus I fortify myself: [*Draws a circle round him.*] and now, Captain, have a care how you force my lines.

Braz. Lines! what dost talk of lines! you have

something like a fishing-rod there, indeed; but I come to be acquainted with you, man—What's your name, my dear?

Kite. Conundrum.

Braz. Conundrum? rat me! I knew a famous doctor in London of your name—Where were you born?

Kite. I was born in Algebra.

Braz. 'Algebra! 'tis no country in Christendom, I'm sure, unless it be some place in the Highlands in Scotland.

Kite. Right—I told you I was bewitch'd.

Braz. So am I, my dear! I am going to be marry'd—I have had two letters from a lady of fortune that loves me to madness, fits, cholick, spleen, and vapours——shall I marry her in four and-twenty hours, ay or no?

Kite. Certainly.

Braz. Gadso, ay———

Kite. —Or no—but I must have the year and the day of the month when these letters were dated.

Braz. Why, you old bitch! did you ever hear of love-letters dated with the year and day of the month? do you think billetdoux are like bank-bills?

Kite. They are not so good, my dear—but if they bear no date, I must examine the contents.

Braz. Contents! that you shall, old boy! here they be both.

Kite. Only the last you received, if you please. [*Takes the Letter.*] Now, Sir, if you please to let me

consult my books for a minute, I'll send this letter enclosed to you with the determination of the stars upon it to your lodgings.

Braz. With all my heart—I must give him—[*Puts his Hands in his Pockets.*] Algebra! I fancy, doctor, 'tis hard to calculate the place of your nativity—Here—[*Gives him Money.*] And if I succeed I'll build a watch-tower on the top of the highest mountain in Wales for the study of astrology and the benefit of the Conundrums. [*Exit.*

Enter PLUME *and* WORTHY.

Wor. O doctor! that letter's worth a million; let me see it: and now I have it I'm afraid to open it.

Plume. Pho! let me see it. [*Opening the Letter.*] If she be a jilt—Damn her she is one—there's her name at the bottom on't.

Wor. How! then I'll travel in good earnest—By all my hopes, 'tis Lucy's hand.

Plume. Lucy's!

Wor. Certainly—'tis no more like Melinda's character, than black is to white.

Plume. Then 'tis certainly Lucy's contrivance to draw in Brazen for a husband—But are you sure 'tis not Melinda's hand?

Wor. You shall see; where's the bit of paper I gave you just now that the devil wrote Melinda upon?

Kite. Here, Sir.

Plume. 'Tis plain they are not the same: and is this the malicious name that was subscribed to the letter

which made Mr. Balance send his daughter into the country?

Wor. The very same: the other fragments I shew'd you just now I once intended for another use; but I think I have turn'd it now to a better advantage.

Plume. But 'twas barbarous to conceal this so long, and to continue me so many hours in the pernicious heresy of believing that angelic creature could change. Poor Sylvia!

Wor. Rich Sylvia, you mean, and poor Captain; ha, ha, ha!—Come, come, friend, Melinda is true, and shall be mine; Sylvia is constant, and may be yours.

Plume. No, she's above my hopes——but for her sake, I'll recant my opinion of her sex.

By some the sex is blam'd without design,
Light harmless censure, such as yours and mine,
Sallies of wit, and vapours of our wine:
Others the justice of the sex condemn,
And wanting merit to create esteem
Would hide their own defects by censuring them:
But they, secure in their all-conq'ring charms,
Laugh at the vain efforts of false alarms.
He magnifies their conquests who complains,
For none would struggle were they not in chains.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT V. SCENE I.

Justice BALANCE's *House.* *Enter* BALANCE *and* SCALE.

Scale.

I SAY 'tis not to be borne, Mr. Balance.

Bal. Look'e, Mr. Scale, for my own part I shall be very tender in what regards the officers of the army; "they expose their lives to so many dangers for "us abroad, that we may give them some grains of "allowance at home.

"*Scale.* Allowance! this poor girl's father is my "tenant, and, if I mistake not, her mother nursed "a child for you—shall they debauch our daughters "to our faces?

"*Bal.* Consider, Mr. Scale, that were it not for "the bravery of these officers, we should have French "dragoons among us that would leave us neither "liberty, property, wives, nor daughters—Come, "Mr. Scale, the gentlemen are vigorous and warm, "and may they continue so! the same heat that "stirs them up to love spurs them on to battle: you "never knew a great general in your life that did not "love a whore. This" I only speak in reference to Captain Plume—for the other spark I know nothing of.

Scale. Nor can I hear of any body that does—Oh! here they come.

Enter SYLVIA, BULLOCK, ROSE, *Prisoners, Constable, and Mob.*

Const. May it please your worships, we took them in the very act, *re infecta*, Sir—The gentleman, indeed, behav'd himself like a gentleman, for he drew his sword and swore, and afterwards laid it down and said nothing.

Bal. Give the gentleman his sword again—Wait you without. [*Exeunt Constable and Watch.*] I'm sorry, Sir, [*To* Sylvia] to know a gentleman upon such terms, that the occasion of our meeting should prevent the satisfaction of an acquaintance.

Syl. Sir, you need make no apology for your warrant, no more than I shall do for my behaviour—my innocence is upon an equal foot with your authority.

Scale. Innocence! have you not seduc'd that young maid?

Syl. No, Mr. Goosecap, she seduc'd me.

Bul. So she did, I'll swear—for she propos'd marriage first.

Bal. What, then you are marry'd, child? [*To* Rose.

Rose. Yes, Sir, to my sorrow.

Bal. Who was witness?

Bul. That was I—I danc'd, threw the stocking, and spoke jokes by their bedside, I'm sure.

Bal. Who was the minister?

Bul. Minister! we are soldiers, and want no minister—they were marry'd by the articles of war.

Bal. Hold thy prating, fool——Your appearance, Sir, promises some understanding; pray, what does this fellow mean?

Syl. He means marriage, I think—but that you know is so odd a thing, that hardly any two people under the sun agree in the ceremony; some make it a sacrament, others a convenience, and others make it a jest; but among soldiers 't is most sacred—our sword you know is our honour, that we lay down—the Hero jumps over it first, and the Amazon after—Leap, rogue, follow, whore—the drum beats a ruff, and so to bed: that's all: the ceremony is concise.

Bul. And the prettiest ceremony, so full of pastime and prodigality——

Bal. What! are you a soldier?

Bul. Ay, that I am—Will your worship lend me your cane, and I'll shew you how I can exercise?

Bal. Take it. [*Strikes him over the head.*] Pray, Sir, what commission may you bear? [*To* Sylvia.

Syl. I'm call'd captain, Sir, by all the coffee-men, drawers, whores, and groom-porters, in London, for I wear a red-coat, a sword, a piquet in my head, and dice in my pocket.

Scale. Your name, pray, Sir?

Syl. Captain Pinch: I cock my hat with a pinch, I take snuff with a pinch, pay my whores with a pinch;

in short I can do any thing at a pinch but fight and fill my belly.

Bal. And pray, Sir, what brought you into Shropshire?

Syl. A pinch, Sir: I know you country gentlemen want wit, and you know that we town gentlemen want money, and so——

Bal. I understand you, Sir—Here, constable——

Enter Constable.

Take this gentleman into custody till further orders.

Rose. Pray your worship don't be uncivil to him, for he did me no hurt; he's the most harmless man in the world, for all he talks so.

Scale. Come, come, child, I'll take care of you.

Syl. What, gentlemen, rob me of my freedom and my wife at once! 'tis the first time they ever went together.

Bal. Hearke, constable. [*Whispers him.*

Const. It shall be done, Sir—Come along, Sir.

[*Exeunt Constable,* Bullock, *and* Sylvia.

Bal. Come, Mr. Scale, we'll manage the spark presently. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

MELINDA'S *Apartment. Enter* MELINDA *and* WORTHY.

Mel. So far the prediction is right, 'tis ten exactly. [*Aside.*] And pray, Sir, how long have you been in this travelling humour?

Wor. 'Tis natural, Madam, for us to avoid what disturbs our quiet.

Mel. Rather the love of change, which is more natural, may be the occasion of it.

Wor. To be sure, Madam, there must be charms in variety, else neither you nor I should be so fond of it.

Mel. You mistake, Mr. Worthy, I am not so fond of variety as to travel for't, nor do I think it prudence in you to run yourself into a certain expence and danger in hopes of precarious pleasures, "which "at best never answer expectation, as it is evident "from the example of most travellers, that long "more to return to their own country than they did "to go abroad."

Wor. What pleasures I may receive abroad are indeed uncertain; but this I am sure of, I shall meet with less cruelty among the most barbarous of nations than I have found at home.

Mel. Come, Sir, you and I have been jangling a great while; I fancy if we made our accounts we should the sooner come to an agreement.

Wor. Sure, Madam, you won't dispute your being in my debt——My fears, sighs, vows, promises, assiduities, anxieties, jealousies, have run on for a whole year without any payment.

Mel. A year! oh, Mr. Worthy! what you owe to me is not to be paid under a seven years' servitude. How did you use me the year before! when, taking the advantage of my innocence and necessity, you

would have made me your mistress, that is, your slave—Remember the wicked insinuations, artful baits, deceitful arguments, cunning pretences; then your impudent behaviour, loose expressions, familiar letters, rude visits; remember those, those, Mr. Worthy.

Wor. I do remember, and am sorry I made no better use of 'em. [*Aside.*] But you may remember, Madam, that——

Mel. Sir, I'll remember nothing—'tis your interest that I should forget. You have been barbarous to me, I have been cruel to you; put that and that together, and let one balance the other—Now, if you will begin upon a new score, lay aside your adventuring airs, and behave yourself handsomely till Lent be over, here's my hand, I'll use you as a gentleman should be.

Wor. And if I don't use you as a gentlewoman should be, may this be my poison. [*Kissing her hand.*

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Madam, the coach is at the door.

Mel. I am going to Mr. Balance's country-house to see my cousin Sylvia; I have done her an injury, and can't be easy till I've ask'd her pardon.

Wor. I dare not hope for the honour of waiting on you.

Mel. My coach is full, but if you'll be so gallant as to mount your own horse and follow us, we shall be

glad to be overtaken; and if you bring Captain Plume with you we sha'n't have the worse reception.

Wor. I'll endeavour it. [*Exit leading* Melinda.

SCENE III.

The Market-Place. Enter PLUME *and* KITE.

Plume. A baker, a tailor, a smith, butchers, carpenters, and journeymen shoemakers, in all thirty-nine—"I believe the first colony planted in Virginia "had not more trades in their company than I have "in mine."

Kite. The butcher, Sir, will have his hands full, for we have two sheep-stealers among us—I hear of a fellow too committed just now for stealing of horses.

Plume. We'll dispose of him among the dragoons—Have we never a pouiterer among us?

Kite. Yes, Sir, the king of the gipsies is a very good one; he has an excellent hand at a goose or a turkey—Here's Captain Brazen, Sir. I must go look after the men.

Enter BRAZEN *reading a Letter.*

Braz. Um, um, um, the canonical hour——Um, um, very well—My dear Plume! give me a buss.

Plume. Half a score if you will, my dear! What hast got in thy hand, child?

Braz. 'Tis a project for laying out a thousand pounds.

Plume. Were it not requisite to project first how to get it in?

Braz. You can't imagine, my dear! that I want twenty thousand pounds; I have spent twenty times as much in the service—" Now, my dear! pray, ad-" vise me—my head runs much upon architecture—" shall I build a privateer or a playhouse?

" *Plume.* An odd question—a privateer or a play-" house! 'twill require some consideration——Faith, " I am for a privateer.

" *Braz.* I am not of your opinion, my dear! for, " in the first place, a privateer may be ill built.

" *Plume.* And so may a playhouse.

" *Braz.* But a privateer may be ill mann'd.

" *Plume.* And so may a playhouse.

" *Braz.* A privateer may run upon the shallows.

" *Plume.* Not so often as a playhouse.

" *Braz.* But you know a privateer may spring a " leak.

" *Plume.* And I know that a playhouse may spring " a great many.

" *Braz.* But suppose the privateer come home " with a rich booty, we should never agree about " our shares.

" *Plume.* 'Tis just so in a playhouse——So by my " advice, you shall fix upon a privateer.

Braz. " Agreed"—but if this twenty thousand pounds should not be in specie——

Plume. What twenty thousand?

Braz. Heark'e——— [*Whispers.*

Plume. Marry'd!

Braz. Presently; we're to meet about half a mile out of town at the waterside—and so forth—[*Reads.*] "For fear I should be known by any of Worthy's "friends you must give me leave to wear my mask "till after the ceremony which will make me for ever "yours"—Look'e there, my dear dog!

[*Shews the Bottom of the Letter to* Plume.

Plume. Melinda! and by this light her own hand! Once more if you please, my dear—Her hand exactly—Just now you say?

Braz. This minute; I must be gone.

Plume. Have a little patience and I'll go with you.

Braz. No, no, I see a gentleman coming this way that may be inquisitive; 'tis Worthy, do you know him?

Plume. By sight only.

Braz. Have a care, the very eyes discover secrets. [*Exit.*

Enter WORTHY.

Wor. To boot and saddle, captain, you must mount.

Plume. Whip and spur, Worthy, or you won't mount.

Wor. But I shall; Melinda and I are agreed; she's gone to visit Sylvia, we are to mount and follow; and

could we carry a parson with us, who knows what might be done for us both?

Plume. Don't trouble your head, Melinda has secur'd a parson already.

Wor. Already! do you know more than I?

Plume. Yes, I saw it under her hand—Brazen and she are to meet half a mile hence at the water-side, there to take boat, I suppose, to be ferry'd over to the Elysian Fields, if there be any such thing in matrimony.

Wor. I parted with Melinda just now; she assured me she hated Brazen, and that she resolv'd to discard Lucy for daring to write letters to him in her name.

Plume. Nay, nay, there's nothing of Lucy in this —I tell ye I saw Melinda's hand as surely as this is mine.

Wor. But I tell you she's gone this minute to Justice Balance's country-house.

Plume. But I tell you she's gone this minute to the water-side.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Madam Melinda has sent word that you need not trouble yourself to follow her, because her journey to Justice Balance's is put off, and she's gone to take the air another way. [*To* Worthy.

Wor. How! her journey put off?

Plume. That is, her journey was a put off to you.

Wor. 'Tis plain, plain—But how, where, when is she to meet Brazen?

Plume. Just now I tell you, half a mile hence, at the water-side.

Wor. Up or down the water?

Plume. That I don't know.

Wor. I'm glad my horses are ready—Jack, get 'em out.

Plume. Shall I go with you?

Wor. Not an inch—I shall return presently. [*Exit.*

Plume. You'll find me at the Hall: the justices are sitting by this time, and I must attend them.

SCENE IV.

A Court of Justice. BALANCE, SCALE, *and* SCRUPLE, *upon the Bench*; *Constable*, KITE, *Mob.*

KITE *and Constable advance.*

Kite. Pray, who are those honourable gentlemen upon the bench?

Const. He in the middle is Justice Balance, he on the right is Justice Scale, and he on the left is Justice Scruple, and I am Mr. Constable; four very honest gentlemen.

Kite. O dear, Sir! I am your most obedient servant. [*Saluting the Constable.*] I fancy, Sir, that your employment and mine are much the same; for my business is to keep people in order, and if they dis-

obey to knock them down; and then we are both staff-officers.

Const. Nay, I'm a serjeant myself—of the militia—Come, brother, you shall see me exercise. Suppose this a musket; now I'm shouldered.

[*Puts his staff on his right shoulder.*

Kite. Ay, you are shouldered pretty well for a constable's staff, but for a musket you must put it on the other shoulder, my dear!

Const. Adso! that's true—Come, now give the word of command.

Kite. Silence.

Const. Ay, ay, so we will—we will be silent.

Kite. Silence, you dog, silence!

[*Strikes him over the head with his halberd.*

Const. That's the way to silence a man with a witness. What do you mean, friend?

Kite. Only to exercise you, Sir.

Const. Your exercise differs so much from ours that we shall ne'er agree about it; if my own captain had given me such a rap I had taken the law of him.

Enter PLUME.

Bul. Captain, you're welcome.

Plume. Gentlemen, I thank you.

Scrip. Come, honest captain, sit by me. [Plume *ascends and sits upon the bench.*] Now produce your prisoners—Here, that fellow there, set him up. Mr. Constable, what have you to say against this man?

Const. I have nothing to say against him, an please you.

Bal. No; what made you bring him hither?

Const. I don't know, an please your worship.

Scale. Did not the contents of your warrant direct you what sort of men to take up?

Const. I can't tell, an please ye; I can't read.

Scrup. A very pretty constable, truly. I find we have no business here.

Kite. May it please the worshipful bench I desire to be heard in this case, as being the counsel for the king.

Bal. Come, serjeant, you shall be heard since nobody else will speak; we won't come here for nothing.

Kite. This man is but one man, the country may spare him, and the army wants him; besides, he's cut out by nature for a grenadier; he's five feet ten inches high; he shall box, wrestle, or dance the Cheshire round with any man in the country; he get's drunk every Sabbath-day, and he beats his wife.

Wife. You lie, sirrah, you lie; an please your worship he's the best natur'd pains-taking'st man in the parish, witness my five poor children.

Scrup. A wife and five children! you constable, you rogue, how durst you impress a man that has a wife and five children?

Scale. Discharge him, discharge him.

Bal. Hold, gentlemen. Hark'e, friend, how do you maintain your wife and five children?

Plume. They live upon wild-fowl and venison, Sir; the husband keeps a gun, and kills all the hares and partridges within five miles round.

Bal. A gun! nay if he be so good at gunning he shall have enough on't. He may be of use against the French, for he shoots flying to be sure.

Scrup. But his wife and children, Mr. Balance.

Wife. Ay, ay, that's the reason you would send him away; you know I have a child every year, and you are afraid that they should come upon the parish at last.

Plume. Look'e there, gentlemen, the honest woman has spoke it at once; the parish had better maintain five children this year than six or seven the next. That fellow upon this high feeding may get you two or three beggars at a birth.

Wife. Look'e, Mr. Captain, the parish shall get nothing by sending him away, for I won't lose my teeming-time if there be a man left in the parish.

Bal. Send that woman to the house of correction ——and the man——

Kite. I'll take care of him if you please.

[*Takes him down.*

Scale. Here, you constable, the next. Set up that black-fac'd fellow, he has a gunpowder look; what can you say against this man, constable?

Const. Nothing, but that he's a very honest man.

Plume. Pray, gentlemen, let me have one honest man in my company, for the novelty's sake.

Bal. What are you, friend?

Mob. A collier; I work in the coal-pits.

Scrup. Look'e, gentlemen, this fellow has a trade, and the act of parliament here expresses that we are to impress no man that has any visible means of a livelihood.

Kite. May it please your worship, this man has no visible means of a livelihood, for he works under-ground.

Plume. Well said, Kite; besides, the army wants miners.

Bal. Right, and had we an order of government for't we could raise you in this and the neighbouring county of Stafford five hundred colliers that would run you under-ground like moles, and do more service in a siege than all the miners in the army.

Scrup. Well, friend, what have you to say for yourself?

Mob. I'm married.

Kite. Lack-a-day! so am I.

Mob. Here's my wife, poor woman.

Bal. Are you married, good woman?

Wom. I'm married in conscience.

Kite. May it please your worship, she's with child in conscience.

Scale. Who married you, mistress?

Wom. My husband: we agreed that I should call

him husband to avoid passing for a whore, and that he should call me wife to shun going for a soldier.

Scrup. A very pretty couple! Pray, captain, will you take them both?

Plume. What say you, Mr. Kite? will you take care of the woman?

Kite. Yes, Sir, she shall go with us to the sea-side, and there if she has a mind to drown herself, we'll take care nobody shall hinder her.

Bal. Here, constable, bring in my man. [*Exit Const.*] Now, captain, I'll fit you with a man such as you never listed in your life.

Enter Constable and SYLVIA.

Oh, my friend Pinch! I'm very glad to see you.

Syl. Well, Sir, and what then?

Scale. What then! is that your respect to the bench?

Syl. Sir, I don't care a farthing for you nor your bench neither.

Scrup. Look'e, gentlemen, that's enough; he's a very impudent fellow, and fit for a soldier.

Scale. A notorious rogue, I say, and very fit for a soldier.

Const. A whoremaster, I say, and therefore fit to go.

Bal. What think you, captain?

Plume. I think he is a very pretty fellow, and therefore fit to serve.

Syl. Me for a soldier! send your own lazy lubberly

sons at home; fellows that hazard their necks every day in the pursuit of a fox, yet dare not peep abroad to look an enemy in the face.

Const. May it please your worships, I have a woman at the door to swear a rape against this rogue.

Syl. Is it your wife or daughter, booby? I ravish'd 'em both yesterday.

Bal. Pray, captain, read the articles of war; we'll see him listed immediately.

Plume. [*reads.*] Articles of war against mutiny and desertion, *&c.*

Syl. Hold, Sir——Once more, gentlemen, have a care what you do, for you shall severely smart for any violence you offer to me; and you, Mr. Balance, I speak to you particularly, you shall heartily repent it.

Plume. Look'e, young spark, say but one word more and I'll build a horse for you as high as the cieling, and make you ride the most tiresome journey that ever you made in your life.

Syl. You have made a fine speech, good Captain Huff-cap! but you had better be quiet; I shall find a way to cool your courage.

Plume. Pray, gentlemen, don't mind him, he's distracted.

Syl. 'Tis false; I am descended of as good a family as any in your county; my father is as good a man as any upon your bench, and I am heir to twelve hundred pounds a-year.

Bal. He's certainly mad. Pray, captain, read the articles of war.

Syl. Hold, once more. Pray, Mr. Balance, to you I speak; suppose I were your child, would you use me at this rate?

Bal. No, faith; were you mine I would send you to Bedlam first, and into the army afterwards.

Syl. But consider my father, Sir; he's as good, as generous, as brave, as just a man as ever serv'd his country; I'm his only child; perhaps the loss of me may break his heart.

Bal. He's a very great fool if it does. Captain, if you don't list him this minute I'll leave the court.

Plume. Kite, do you distribute the levy money to the men while I read.

Kite. Ay, Sir. Silence, gentlemen.

[Plume *reads the articles of war.*

Bal. Very well; now, captain, let me beg the favour of you not to discharge this fellow upon any account whatsoever. Bring in the rest.

Const. There are no more, an't please your worship.

Bal. No more! there were five two hours ago.

Syl. 'Tis true, Sir, but this rogue of a constable let the rest escape for a bribe of eleven shillings a man, because he said the act allowed him but ten, so the odd shilling was clear gains.

All Just. How!

Syl. Gentlemen, he offered to let me go away, for

two guineas, but I had not so much about me: this is truth, and I'm ready to swear it.

Kite. And I'll swear it: give me the book; 'tis for the good of the service.

Mob. May it please your worship I gave him half a crown to say that I was an honest man; but now since that your worships have made me a rogue, I hope I shall have my money again.

Bal. 'Tis my opinion that this constable be put into the captain's hands, and if his friends don't bring four good men for his ransom by to-morrow night, captain, you shall carry him to Flanders.

Scale. Scrap. Agreed, agreed.

Plume. Mr. Kite, take the constable into custody.

Kite. Ay, ay, Sir. [*To the Constable.*] Will you please to have your office taken from you, or will you handsomely lay down your staff, as your betters have done before you? [*Constable drops his Staff.*

Bal. Come, gentlemen, there needs no great ceremony in adjourning this court. Captain, you shall dine with me.

Kite. Come, Mr. Militia Serjeant, I shall silence you now, I believe, without your taking the law of me. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.

The Fields. "*Enter* BRAZEN, *leading in* LUCY "*mask'd.*

"*Braz.* The boat is just below here.

" *Enter* WORTHY, *with a case of pistols under his arm.*

" *Wor.* Here, sir, take your choice.

" [*Going between 'em, and offering them.*

" *Braz.* What, pistols! are they charged, my dear?

" *Wor.* With a brace of bullets each.

" *Braz.* But I'm a foot-officer, my dear! and ne-
" ver use pistols; the sword is my way, and I won't
" be put out of my road to please any man.

" *Wor.* Nor I neither; so have at you.

" [*Cocks one pistol.*

" *Braz.* Look'e, my dear! I don't care for pistols—
" Pray oblige me, and let us have a bout at sharps.
" Damn it! there's no parrying these bullets.

" *Wor.* Sir, if you ha'n't your bellyfull of these,
" the sword shall come in for second course.

" *Braz.* Why then, fire and fury! I have eaten
" smoke from the mouth of a cannon, sir; don't
" think I fear powder, for I live upon't. Let me see:
" [*Takes one.*] and now, sir, how many paces distance
" shall we fire?

" *Wor.* Fire when you please; I'll reserve my shot
" till I am sure of you.

" *Braz.* Come, where's your cloak?

" *Wor.* Cloak! what d'ye mean?

" *Braz.* To fight upon; I always fight upon a
" cloak; 'tis our way abroad.

" *Lucy.* Come, gentlemen, I'll end the [illegible]

" [*Unmasks.*

" *Wor.* Lucy! take her.

" *Braz.* The devil take me if I do——Huzza!—
" [*Fires his pistol.*] D'ye hear, d'ye hear, you plaguy
" harridan, how those bullets whistle? Suppose they
" had been lodged in my gizzard?

" *Lucy.* Pray, sir, pardon me.

" *Braz.* I cann't tell, child, till I know whether my
" money is safe. [*Searching his pockets.*] Yes, yes, I
" do pardon you; but if I had you at the Rose Ta-
" vern in Covent-Garden, with three or four hearty
" rakes, and three or four smart napkins, I would tell
" you another story, my dear! [*Exit.*

" *Wor.* And was Melinda privy to this?

" *Lucy.* No, sir; she wrote her name upon a piece
" of paper at the fortune-teller's last night, which I
" put in my pocket, and so writ above it to the cap-
" tain.

" *Wor.* And how came Melinda's journey put off?

" *Lucy.* At the town's end she met Mr. Balance's
" steward, who told her that Mrs. Sylvia was gone
" from her father's, and nobody could tell whither.

" *Wor.* Sylvia gone from her father's! this will be
" news to Plume. Go home and tell your lady how
" near I was being shot for her. [*Exeunt.*"

SCENE VI.

A Room in BALANCE's *House.* *Enter* BALANCE *and Steward.*

Stew. We did not miss her till the evening, sir;

and then, searching for her in the chamber that was my young master's, we found her clothes there; but the suit that your son left in the press when he went to London was gone.

Bal. The white trimm'd with silver?

Stew. The same.

Bal. You ha'n't told that circumstance to any body?

Stew. To none but your worship.

Bal. And be sure you don't. Go into the dining-room, and tell Captain Plume that I beg to speak with him.

Stew. I shall. [*Exit.*

Bal. Was ever man so imposed upon! I had her promise indeed that she would never dispose of herself without my consent—I have consented with a witness, given her away as my act and deed—and this, I warrant, the captain thinks will pass. No, I shall never pardon him the villany, first of robbing me of my daughter, and then the mean opinion he must have of me to think that I could be so wretchedly imposed upon: her extravagant passion might encourage her in the attempt, but the contrivance must be his. I'll know the truth presently.

Enter PLUME.

Pray, Captain, what have you done with our young gentleman soldier?

Plume. He's at my quarters, I suppose, with the rest of my men.

Bal. Does he keep company with the common soldiers?

Plume. No, he's generally with me.

Bal. He lies with you, I presume.

Plume. No, faith; I offered him part of my bed—but the young rogue fell in love with Rose, and has lain with her, I think, since she came to town.

Bal. So that between you both Rose has been finely manag'd.

Plume. Upon my honour, sir, she had no harm from me.

Bal. All's safe, I find—Now, captain, you must know, that the young fellow's impudence in court was well grounded; he said I should heartily repent his being listed, and so I do from my soul.

Plume. Ay! for what reason?

Bal. Because he is no less than what he said he was, born of as good a family as any in this county, and he is heir to twelve hundred pounds a-year.

Plume. I'm very glad to hear it—for I wanted but a man of that quality to make my company a perfect representative of the whole commons of England.

Bal. Won't you discharge him?

Plume. Not under a hundred pounds sterling.

Bal. You shall have it, for his father is my intimate friend.

Plume. Then you shall have him for nothing.

Bal. Nay sir, you shall have your price.

Plume. Not a penny, sir; I value an obligation to you much above an hundred pounds.

Bal. Perhaps, sir, you shan't repent your generosity——Will you please to write his discharge in my pocket-book? [*Gives his book.*] In the mean time we'll send for the gentleman. Who waits there?

Enter a Servant.

Go to the captain's lodging, and inquire for Mr. Wilful; tell him his captain wants him here immediately.

Serv. Sir, the gentleman's below at the door inquiring for the captain.

Plume. Bid him come up. Here's the discharge, sir.

Bal. Sir, I thank you—'Tis plain he had no hand in't. [*Aside.*

Enter SYLVIA.

Syl. I think, captain, you might have us'd me better than to leave me yonder among your swearing drunken crew; and you, Mr. Justice, might have been so civil as to have invited me to dinner, for I have eaten with as good a man as your worship.

Plume. Sir, you must charge our want of respect upon our ignorance of your quality—but now you are at liberty—I have discharg'd you.

Syl. Discharg'd me!

Bal. Yes, sir, and you must once more go home to your father.

Syl. My father! then I am discovered——Oh, sir! [*Kneeling.*] I expect no pardon.

Bal. Pardon! no, no, child; your crime shall be your punishment: here, captain, I deliver her over to the conjugal power for her chastisement. Since she will be a wife, be you a husband, a very husband —When she tells you of her love, upbraid her with her folly; be modishly ungrateful, because she has been unfashionably kind; and use her worse than you would any body else, because you cann't use her so well as she deserves.

Plume. And are you, Sylvia, in good earnest?

Syl. Earnest! I have gone too far to make it a jest, sir.

Plume. And do you give her to me in good earnest?

Bal. If you please to take her, sir.

Plume. Why then I have saved my legs and arms, and lost my liberty; secure from wounds, I am prepared for the gout: farewell subsistence, and welcome taxes—Sir, my liberty and the hope of being a general are much dearer to me than your twelve hundred pounds a-year—but to your love, madam, I resign my freedom, and to your beauty my ambition—greater in obeying at your feet than commanding at the head of an army.

Enter WORTHY.

Wor. I am sorry to hear, Mr. Balance, that your daughter is lost.

Bal. Am not I, sir, since an honest gentleman has found her.

Enter MELINDA.

Mel. Pray, Mr. Balance, what's become of my cousin Sylvia.

Bal. Your cousin Sylvia is talking yonder with your cousin Plume.

Mel. And Worthy. How!

Syl. Do you think it strange, cousin, that a woman should change; but I hope you'll excuse a change that has proceeded from constancy: I alter'd my outside because I was the same within, and only laid by the woman to make sure of my man: that's my history.

Mel. Your history is a little romantic, cousin; but since success has crown'd your adventures, you will have the world on your side, and I shall be willing to go with the tide, provided you'll pardon an injury I offer'd you in the letter to your father.

Plume. That injury, madam, was done to me, and the reparation I expect shall be made to my friend: make Mr. Worthy happy, and I shall be satisfy'd.

Mel. A good example, sir, will go a great way—When my cousin is pleas'd to surrender, 'tis probable I sha'n't hold out much longer.

Enter BRAZEN.

Braz. Gentlemen, I am yours—Madam, I am not yours.

Mel. I'm glad on't, sir.

Braz. So [illegible] have got a pretty house here, Mr. [illegible].

Bal. 'Tis [illegible] all mistakes—My name, sir, is Balance.

Braz. Balance! Sir, I am your most obedient—I know your whole generation—had not you an uncle that was governor of the Leeward Islands some years ago?

Bal. Did you know him?

Braz. Intimately, sir—He play'd at billiards to a miracle—You had a brother too that was a captain of a fire-ship—poor Dick—he had the most engaging way with him of making punch—and then his cabin was so neat—but his poor boy Jack was the most comical bastard—Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha! a pickled dog, I shall never forget him.

"*Plume.* Well, captain, are you fix'd in your project yet? are you still for the privateer?

"*Braz.* No, no—I had enough of a privateer just "now; I had like to have been picked up by a "cruise runder false colours, and a French pickaroon, "for aught I know."

Plume. Have you got your recruits, my dear?

Braz. Not a stick, my dear!

Plume. Probably I shall furnish you.

Enter ROSE *and* BULLOCK.

Rose. Captain, captain, I have got loose once

more, and have persuaded my sweetheart Cartwheel to go with us; but you must promise not to part with me again.

Syl. I find Mrs. Rose has not been pleas'd with her bedfellow.

Rose. Bedfellow! I don't know whether I had a bedfellow or not.

Syl. Don't be in a passion, child; I was as little pleas'd with your company as you could be with mine.

Bul. Pray, sir, donna be offended at my sister, she's something underbred; but if you please I'll lie with you in her stead.

Plume. I have promised, madam, to provide for this girl: now will you be pleased to let her wait upon you, or shall I take care of her?

Syl. She shall be my charge, sir; you may find it business enough to take care of me.

Bul. Ay, and of me, captain; for wauns! if ever you lift your hand against me I'll desert——

Plume. Captain Brazen shall take care o' that. My dear! instead of the twenty thousand pounds you talk'd of, you shall have the twenty brave recruits that I have raised at the rate they cost me——My commission I lay down, to be taken up by some brave fellow that has more merit and less good fortune—whilst I endeavour, by the example of this war by gentleman, to serve my king and country at home.

With some regret I quit the acting [illegible]
Where glory full reward for life [illegible]
But the [illegible]ruiting trade, with [illegible]
Of [illegible]less [illegible]gue, fatigue, and [illegible]
I gladly quit, with my fair spouse [illegible]
And raise Recruits the matrimonial [illegible]

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